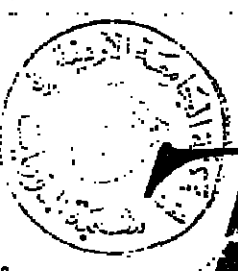


Table of international exchange rates for various countries including Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, etc.



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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,741

## Friday Review



# Legal row over disowned twins

## Mother challenges gap in fertility law

**Claire Dyer**  
Legal Correspondent  
**A**N UNMARRIED mother is fighting an unprecedented High Court case to have her 62-year-old live-in partner declared the legal father of twins born to the couple as a result of donor insemination abroad.

pean Community law. The Government regards the issue as so important that the Attorney General, Sir Nicholas Lyell, briefed lawyers to defend the legislation. Mr Justice Wilson may defer his ruling until the Appeal Court's judgment in the case of Diane Blood, the widow of a man who was inseminated with her dead husband's sperm. Her appeal, to be heard next month, raises related issues of European law. The mother's lawyers hope to persuade Lord Winston, the infertile pioneer, who wants to introduce a private member's bill to allow Mrs

Blood to go ahead, to include a clause plugging the loophole leaving her twins fatherless. Under the act, if an unmarried couple have fertility treatment in Britain and a baby results, the man is deemed to be the legal father. But no such rule applies if the couple live in Britain but undergo treatment abroad. Sheila McLean, professor of law and ethics in medicine at Glasgow university, said: "This seems another of those loopholes nobody thought about. There's a lot of sense in saying children shouldn't suffer because we haven't harmonised our laws, and there's a case for saying the man should support the children if he agreed to the insemination." The professional couple, who cannot be identified for legal reasons, live in England but travelled to another European member state for treatment. The man's fertility is low and the couple underwent treatment for several years in Britain without success. They decided to go abroad to try a new technique designed to help men with low sperm counts or poor quality of sperm to become fathers. Known as ICSI (intracytoplasmic sperm injection), it was pioneered in Belgium, but has only recently become widely available in Britain. Eggs are removed from the woman and injected with individual sperm, and the resulting embryos implanted in the womb. But the couple's treatment failed and they agreed the woman should be artificially inseminated by a donor. Her partner signed a statement in the country where the insemination was carried out, acknowledging paternity of any resulting child. The couple returned to England but split up shortly after the twins' birth. The man is understood to have found it

hard to reconcile himself to the fact that the twins, whom he sees occasionally, are not his natural children. Citing the act, he is denying he is their legal father, and is refusing to pay for their support. Lawyers for the mother, who brought the case on legal aid, asked the judge to "disapply" a section of the act which deems the man to be the legal father only if a couple are treated in Britain. They argued this conflicts with the right of free movement of European Union citizens to receive services, including medical treatment, in other member states. Under the terms on which Britain signed up to the EC, any national law which is inconsistent with a provision of EC law is automatically overruled by the conflicting community law. The judge could refer the case to the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg for a ruling. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, which enforces the act, is keeping a neutral stance. The case is thought to be the first in which lawyers have sought to strike down UK legislation in the family sphere on the basis of conflict with EC law.

## Ministries to be sued over E. coli

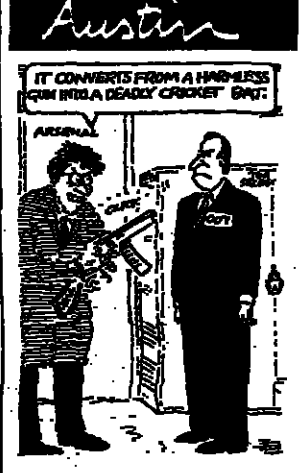
**Sarah Boseley**  
**T**HE parents of seven children who became ill after eating meat contaminated with *E. coli* 0157 bacteria have granted legal aid to sue the Government for failing to warn the public of the risks in undercooking beef. All seven children live in England, but their lawyers are in discussions with lawyers in Scotland, where yesterday it was announced that two more people, a 76-year-old man and a 78-year-old woman, had died in the food poisoning epidemic, bringing the toll to 15. The number with symptoms remains at 405, which the Scottish Office and health boards believe suggests the outbreak is under control. There are 235 confirmed cases, but more confirmations are expected. Legal aid has been granted so that a test case can be brought against the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Department of Health for negligence, hopefully within 12 months. Lucy Kennedy, of Howe and Co in west London, acting for the children, called the case ground-breaking. The first outbreak of *E. coli* 0157 infection in the United States occurred in 1982 and in Britain in 1983. In the US, government had ensured that the public knew beef must be cooked until no pink remained — the infection could be killed by two minutes at 70C — and there were warnings on packaging. "In Britain, there was a government advisory committee report published in 1985 which recommended in-



Chess player Luke McShane, aged 13, who yesterday achieved Britain's youngest International Master norm by sharing second prize in the Caledonian Masters. Matthew Sadler had held the record at 13. Sport, page 15 PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACKENZIE

## Polls back duke in handgun row

**Erland Clouston and Alex Bellis**  
**T**HE Duke of Edinburgh yesterday apologised to relatives of those shot in the Dunblane massacre for any offences caused by his criticism of proposed gun controls, but opinion polls showed considerable support for his stand. The duke sparked a furore during a BBC radio interview broadcast last night, in which he criticised legislation targeting gun clubs, saying that cricket bats could be as lethal as handguns. He later apologised to relatives of the Dunblane victims, but a Buckingham Palace spokesman said he did not retract his views. Three polls gave the impression that many people were behind the duke. At the New Golf Club in Dunblane, members sympathised with his comments that golfers were as dangerous as gun owners. "Somebody's got to speak out for the shooters," one said. "You can't start telling other people how to live their lives." "You can batter someone with a hockey stick; anything's lethal," another added.



Bob Niven, a retired hospitality organiser, said: "The parents of the murdered children have all the support of the Dunblane people but now, like the Duke of Edinburgh, members sympathise with his comments that golfers were as dangerous as gun owners. 'Somebody's got to speak out for the shooters,' one said. 'You can't start telling other people how to live their lives.' 'You can batter someone with a hockey stick; anything's lethal,' another added."

## Tories admit £50m cuts will hit war pensioners

**David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent**  
**M**INISTERS have admitted that the planned changes in war pension rules will hit armed forces veterans and save millions of pounds for the Treasury. When the Guardian disclosed that cuts worth £50 million a year had been slipped through the Budget as "simplification" of the rules, ministers accused the newspaper of scaremongering. John Major said last week in the Commons that the Guardian's reports had been "disgraceful" and had made

selective use of leaked information. However, written answers to parliamentary questions have confirmed the basis of the reports — including savings figures that ministers had previously sought to cast doubt on. Oliver Heald, junior social security minister, has acknowledged that the package of changes out for consultation will, as the Guardian reported, produce net annual savings of £15 million by 1999. Added to the £35 million eventual annual savings from the separate tightening of the criteria for deafness pensions — a change ministers claim is being forced on them by medical advice — the total

cut in war pension spending comes to the reported £50 million. Mr Heald has not confirmed that the £15 million package will create 7,000-10,000 losers in terms of future pension claimants, as suggested by confidential documents seen by the Guardian. He has, though, admitted that some of the planned changes will stop veterans and widows making fresh claims: 800 a year in the case of a mobility supplement for disabled ex-service personnel; 400 more annually in the case of an unemployment supplement; and about 100 a year in the case of war widows' rent allowance, which is to be phased out. The minister has declined to answer questions on some other of the changes on grounds of the "disproportionate cost" of doing so. The questions were put down by John Denham, Labour's pensions spokesman. He said last night: "I am calling on the Prime Minister to come clean and admit that the Budget is going to deny benefits to war pensioners who would have received them under current rules. 'The parliamentary replies appear to make it perfectly clear that these cuts in the spending programme go well beyond administrative savings,' administrative savings." Mr Heald's admissions will increase pressure on the central advisory committee on war pensions, which is considering the planned changes. Some ex-service groups on the committee have sided with ministers; others have said they are keeping their powder dry. Leader comment, page 8

## SEND A BABY BOX TO BOSNIA THIS CHRISTMAS FOR ONLY £30

Disinfectant, nappies, washing materials — not what you'd think of giving someone for Christmas. But for an impoverished mother in Bosnia trying to keep her child safe from infection, these basic essentials would mean the world. It would also mean that someone somewhere is thinking of her, and her efforts to protect her child. Children's Aid Direct has delivered baby boxes full of essential items directly into the hands of 33,000 mothers in Bosnia — many of whom will be living in war-damaged housing and in very basic conditions this winter. Please, if you possibly can, send a baby box to Bosnia this Christmas — and help a mother keep her baby safe.

- 18 nappies (100% cotton-rouleau)
- 200 nappy liners
- 2 baby pins
- 1 baby gown
- 3 pairs plastic baby pants
- 100 baby wipes in a tub
- 100 ml baby oil
- 3 ml baby sponge
- 500ml baby shampoo
- 250-300ml baby lotion
- springs and small towel
- 400g block washing soap
- feeding bowl and 2 spoons
- teething ring
- breastfeeding helper

**With love from a friend...**  
Call 0990 606010 now to tell us how many baby boxes you would like to send. OR please complete and return this form.  
Please send \_\_\_\_\_ baby box(es) of £30 each on my behalf.  
I enclose a cheque for £ \_\_\_\_\_ (total) made payable to Children's Aid Direct  
OR please debit £ \_\_\_\_\_ from my  Visa  Access  Switch  
Card number \_\_\_\_\_  
Last three digits of Switch card no. \_\_\_\_\_ Switch issue no. \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Name (snp) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Postcode \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
If you would like to send a package to a Bosnian mother, please send a note your donation and we will put it in your baby box. Please send from Children's Aid Direct, Dept 477, REEFWOOD, Reading, RG1 1BL.  
Registered charity no. 802276  
Children's Aid Direct  
FOR THE CHILDREN (Holland)

**Inside**  
Fewer than half of European Union inhabitants think their country's membership is a good thing, found an EU survey.

**World News**  
An FBI man thought to have sold secrets to the Russians was arrested after his wife, also a bureau employee, told the FBI her suspicions.

**Finance**  
Labour said it may take away the London Metal Exchange's right to operate as a self-regulatory body unless it agrees to reforms.

**Sport**  
Frank Clark quit as manager of Nottingham Forest, the Premier League's bottom club, after 10 days in charge.



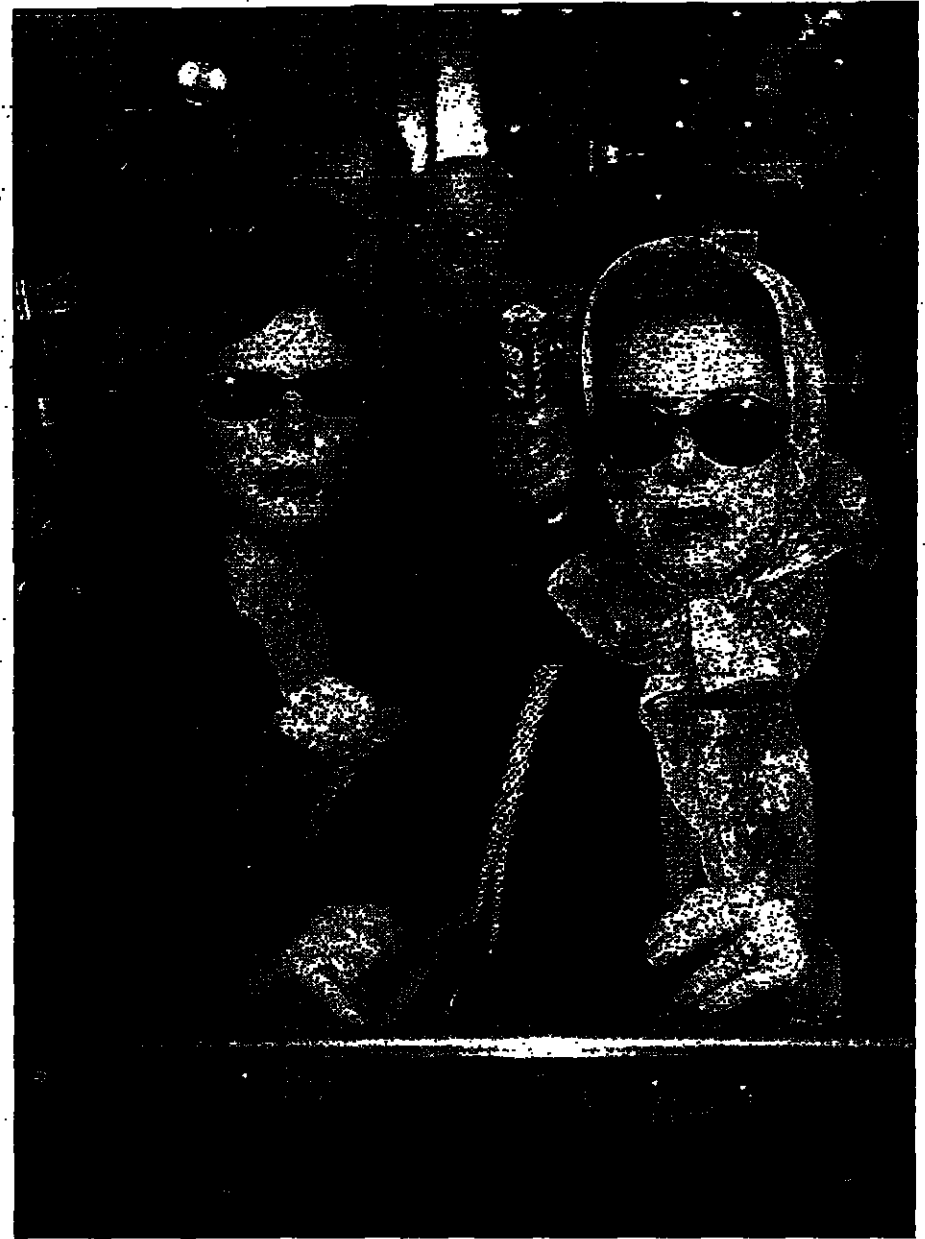




Mastroianni (left) and Sophia Loren in 1970 on the set in Padua of *The Priest's Wife*, directed by Dino Risì (centre)

Marcello on Mastroianni:

'I seem to have been making the same film all my life. There's a kind of sadness, a kind of yearning for what might have been, or what might just still be. I think I appeal best to those who have known romantic disappointment. I express best that life's difficult but that you have to go on'



Catherine Deneuve and Chiara Mastroianni in Paris yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: LAURENT RESOUES

Screen legend Marcello Mastroianni dies

Derek Malcolm, the Guardian's film critic, looks back at the distinguished acting career of the man known as Il Bel Marcello

MARCELLO Mastroianni, for almost 40 years one of European cinema's international stars, has died, aged 73. He had pancreatic cancer. His former partner, Catherine Deneuve, the French actress, and his two daughters — Chiara, Deneuve's child and also an actress, and Barbara, by his wife Flora, whom he left but never divorced — were at his side at his home in Paris.

It was not a tag he appreciated. "I'm not a sex addict, I'm an actor just doing a job," he once said, adding that he was only cast as the journalist in Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*, his first big international success, because he had, according to the director, "a terribly ordinary face".

His fans — in Italy they called him *Il Bel Marcello* — would hardly agree. Even in his last years, he remained an inimitably handsome figure, often walking through his films with a resigned air that suggested a lifetime of romantic disasters. He was a consummate screen actor whose lasting axiom was: "The less you do, the better you do it". Though he had many offers from Hollywood, he remained ad-

manent that European films suited him better. This year, although obviously unwell, he appeared at the Cannes festival to support his latest film, Raoul Ruiz's *Three Lives and Only One Death*, in which he had the difficult task of playing three characters who turn out to be the same person. Only the fact that international juries at Cannes had already given him two best actor prizes prevented him winning a third. His modesty, which allowed him to help less experienced actors and actresses in his films by insisting — sometimes unsuccessfully — on not hogging the screen, was renewed. But Visconti, who used him in *White Nights* in 1957 after he had been a member of the director's amateur theatre company in the immediate post-war years, said: "If you have Marcello in your film, you have to use him most of the time. Why? Because he expresses so much, just by looking at or past the camera. That's his quality. You can imagine what you

like about life and love — it is all in his beautiful, melancholy face." The distinguished French producer Toscan du Plantier called him "perhaps the greatest European actor of the last 50 years". He was not an immediate screen success. After a good early career on the stage, he appeared in a number of Italian films that did not show his real qualities. But after playing the womanising journalist in *La Dolce Vita* he found himself much in demand. Antonioni cast him to great effect in the mysterious *La Notte*. Fellini used him as his alter ego in *8½* and America noticed with delight his performance as the effete Sicilian in Pietro Germi's *Divorce, Italian Style*, and then in De Sica's *Marriage, Italian Style*. Later, the British director John Boorman used him to great effect as a rich benefactor in *Leo The Last*. Later, he was magnificent in *Dark Eyes*, a Chekhovian tale, and played an

effective cameo in Robert Altman's *Prêt à Porter*. He seemed lost without work, appearing in rather more films than was wise. Some of them suggested his weariness with the world was also boredom with his parts. But he still held the affection of the public, whether he was showing his under-used sense of humour as the elderly tap dancer in Fellini's *Ginger and Fred* or playing a worn-out but still desired Casanova. He appeared with most of Europe's more potent female stars including Sophia Loren, Brigitte Bardot, Anita Ekberg, Jeanne Moreau, Giulietta Masina and Monica Vitti, and with American stars such as Faye Dunaway and Shirley MaLaine. None could upstage him.

La Dolce Vita

- Born: September 28, 1924, at Fontana Liri, a hamlet south-east of Rome.
□ Childhood: Acted in church plays. Forced by father to leave school at 14.
□ Second world war: While working as a draftsman, aged 19, picked up by Nazi troops occupying Rome and sent to a forced labour camp. Escaped to Venice.
□ Post-war: Worked in Rome as clerk at British Eagle-Lion film company. Began acting with university theatre company.
□ Marriage: To Flora Carabella, an actress, in 1950, with whom he had daughter Barbara.
□ Scandal: In 1972, left wife to live with actress Catherine Deneuve. They had a daughter, Chiara, before separating a few years later.
□ Career: More than 120 films since debut as a lead in 1947 in *Les Misérables*.
□ Major films include: Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*, 1960; *Divorce Italian Style*, 1961; *8½*, 1963; *Marriage Italian Style*, 1964; *City of Women*, 1980; *Ginger and Fred*, 1996; *Three Lives and Only One Death*, 1996.

Greer declares his firms insolvent

Clients desert lobbyist after he and Hamilton drop libel action

LOBBYIST Ian Greer, the central figure in the parliamentary sleaze scandal, has declared his three main companies are insolvent, it emerged yesterday. The one-time king of Westminster influence-brokers has called in accountants to prepare for liquidation. Ian Greer Associates, the UK arm, and Ian Greer Associates (Europe) saw the roster of blue-chip clients that once included British Airways, Thames Water and PowerGen evaporate after his September 30 High Court humiliation. Mr Greer climbed down at the last minute from a multi-million-pound libel action

against the Guardian, which had named him as middleman in the cash-for-questions affair involving Conservative MPs. "The publicity surrounding this has cost him his business," said the accountant now running the bankrupt empire. "His clients have gone elsewhere and it is now up to us to find out what remains." Three of the five Ian Greer companies are to be wound up; a fourth is based in Edinburgh and subject to Scottish insolvency law and the fifth is the holding company. The end came for Mr Greer's empire a few days ago, according to a source close to the insolvency, when the self-styled "political ani-

mal" was told by his accountant that matters could not continue in the way that they were. Total debts are not yet known, nor whether creditors will be paid in full. Should there be a shortfall, the Official Receiver may investigate what was once the most powerful lobbying machine in Westminster. Since the 1970s, Mr Greer had imported high-pressure American lobbying techniques and built himself an enviable client list. More than 20 MPs took campaign money, and Mr Greer says he raised 570,000 for the Conservative Party during the decade 1985-95. The former minister Neil Hamilton — Mr Greer's plaintiff against the Guardian — took £10,000 from Mr Greer.

Already, many of Mr Greer's remaining British clients have been handed over to lobbyist Adele Biss & Co. Even that deal, principally the ousting of Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto, have damaged his international operation, IGA International, once thought to be the only viable part of the business remaining. Mr Greer has asked Keith Goodman, partner with accountants Leonard Curtis, to assist in winding up the businesses. Creditors will meet on January 7, when Mr Goodman will be proposed as liquidator. Leonard Curtis said: "In the meantime, Mr Goodman is investigating the demise of the business and a full report will be given after the creditors' meeting." Mr Goodman said he would prepare for the winding up "in a way which ensures the maximum return to creditors".

Duke apologises but polls back his stand on handguns

continued from page 1 ban handguns. He said it was irrational to target gun clubs; it was the person, not the weapon, that was dangerous. In a Radio 5 Live poll, 68 per cent (2,784) of those who called in agreed with the duke's comments. The question asked was: "Do you agree with the comments of the Duke of Edinburgh that a complete ban on handguns is an over-reaction to the events at Dunblane?"

Of a most 10,000 GMTV viewers who phoned a telephone poll answering the question "Is the prince right?", 75 per cent said yes. And in a Sky News poll of more than 7,000 viewers, 72 per cent agreed with the duke's comments. Ann Pearson, spokeswoman for the Dunblane Snowdrop petition, said: "My only conclusion is that the shooting community set up early when aroused."

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, said: "He is entitled to his views, but I think on reflection that was not a wise analogy." George Robertson, shadow Scottish secretary and a resident of Dunblane, welcomed the duke's expression of regret, but said of the comments: "This is just the view of a very uninformated old man. They are the views of one aristocrat based on a completely crazy comparison."

John Major was silent on the affair, possibly because the handgun issue divides his party. A Harris poll published yesterday showed that 45 per cent of Tory backbenchers favour leaving the gun laws alone. Michael Yardley, national spokesman of the pro-gun group the Sportsman's Association, said: "Shooting is one of the safest sports in the country. Fishing and football create more casualties."

Advertisement for American Express travel insurance. Features a large question mark graphic with the text: "Do you really want to travel without insurance?" and "A very down to earth question." Includes contact number 0300 700737 and American Express logo.

Traditionally, fact has very little to do with this best-beloved of movie debates. It is mood and feel and politics that matter. You don't even need to have seen a film before denouncing it. Peter Preston

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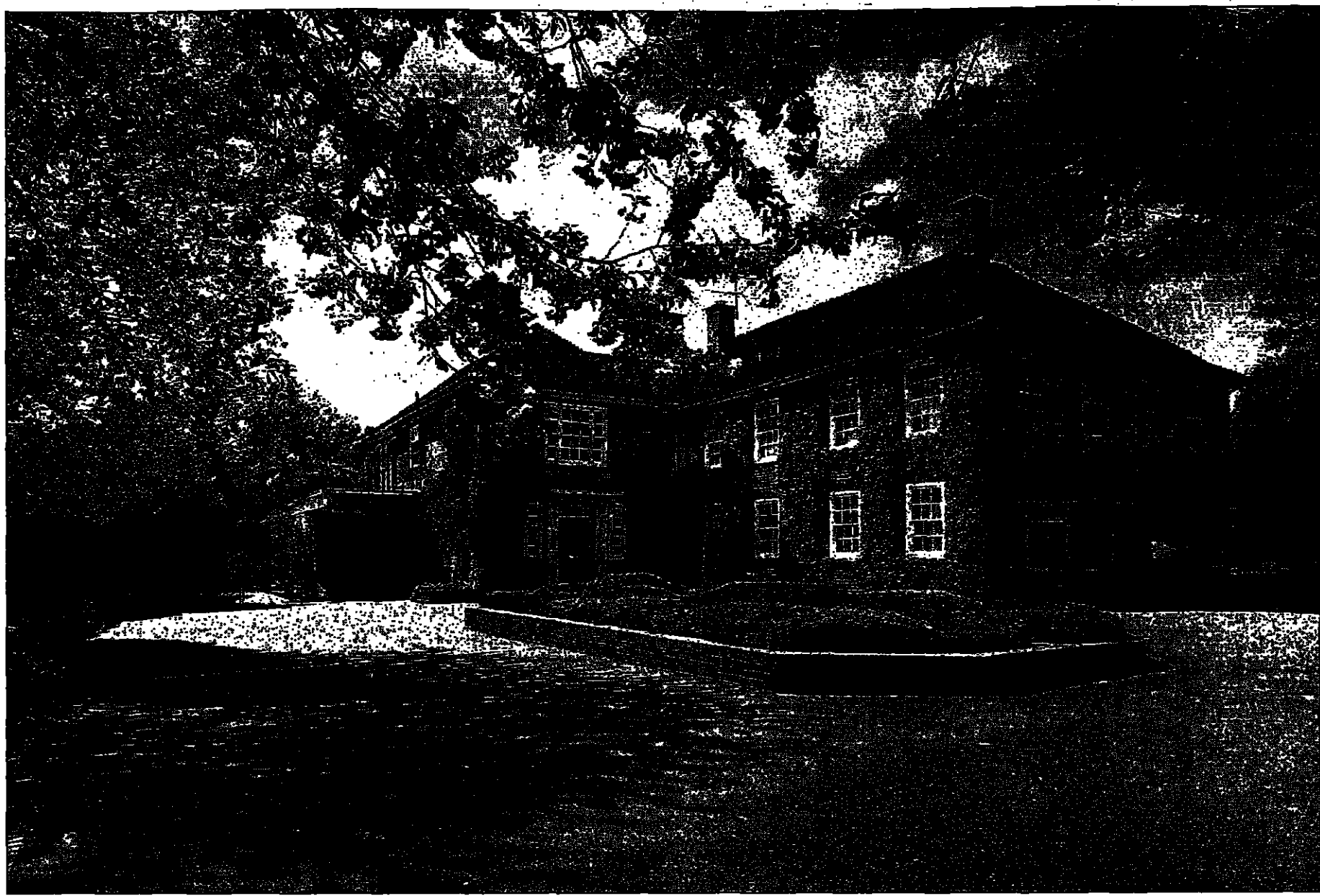


## Russia's elite go west for a good life in the Home Counties

James Meikle on eager investors and the return of 'swinging London'

THEY used to infiltrate British society by buying up MI6's brightest brains; now they buy up the country house property that housed the Establishment.

The moneyed classes of Russia and eastern Europe are as tempted by a dacha near Weybridge as one outside Moscow, snapping up expensive Home Counties homes within easy reach of London, their children's private schools, and Heathrow and Gatwick airports.



East European buyers like contemporary homes with good security and everything in place (above and top left), according to estate agents

Its annual survey on country homes selling for more than £750,000 found that a quarter of foreign buyers came from behind the former Iron Curtain, while there was a dramatic drop in sales to Far Eastern clients.

Another company, Strutt and Parker, says eight in 10 of its residential properties in fashionable parts of London are going to overseas buyers, as the capital enjoys its best image since the swinging '60s.

Rupert Sweeting, a partner in Knight Frank specialising in country homes, said: "It is all about quality of life."

Here people get everything they want without having to queue for it and without having to go to the black mass.

Russians and Czechs normally sought contemporary homes "in tip-top order". Tim Garbett, at the company's office in Esher, Surrey, said Eastern European buyers liked something "they do not have to touch and they can just turn the key", with the latest security.

With the new politics in Russia, they can open their wings a little bit more. The Russian rush for country homes follows the arrival of hundreds of their children to British prep and public schools, among them President Yeltsin's grandson, who started at £18,000-a-year Millfield School in Somerset last term. However, last year also saw 78 per cent of such properties going to Britons, the highest figure since the '80s.

## Judge lifts jail ban on reporters

Prohibition of interviews ruled as interference with free speech

Alan Travis Home Affairs Editor

A BLANKET ban on journalists interviewing inmates in prison was yesterday ruled illegal by the High Court as an unjustified interference with the right of free speech.

The landmark ruling on restrictions on prisoners' access to the press marked a victory for two journalists, freelance Bob Woffinden and BBC Wales reporter Karen Voisey, who had been investigating two alleged miscarriages of justice.

both serving life for murders they say they did not commit. Mr Woffinden, a former Yorkshire Television documentary maker and author of a book, *Miscarriages of Justice*, was banned from further visits to Simms in Full Sutton prison, in York, unless he signed an undertaking not to publish any material he obtained during his visits.

Mr Justice Latham said that the ban was to stop prisoners communicating material which might further distress their victims or their families or "outrage the public at large".

Mr Justice Latham said since inmates could write to the press, he could not see any reason why they should be stopped from making the same point orally. He said he recognised that occasional abuses might occur.

## Cathedral row ends with dean's exit

Christmas boycott by bishop terminates seven-year 'scandal'

Madeline Dunne Religious Affairs Editor

THE Dean of Lincoln has decided he has "had enough" and will resign by the spring, ending one of the longest and most bitter personality wrangles in the Church of England for decades.

The Very Rev Brandon Jackson said he no longer had any appetite for the battle that for seven years tore apart Lincoln Cathedral. Hitherto he had insisted he would not quit unless the cathedral's sub-dean, Canon Rex Davis, also resigned.



Brandon Jackson: 'Fed up with innuendo and lies'

Jackson. I have no intention of even considering resignation." In July 1989, Dean Jackson was subjected to a trial before a consistory or Church court on charges of sexual impropriety with a vergar. After he was cleared, he accused the bishop and other cathedral staff of conspiring to bring him down. On several occasions, he referred to an evil presence in the Lincoln cloisters.

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## EU survey shows drop in support

Stephen Bates in Brussels

FEWER than half the inhabitants of the European Union now see their country's membership as a good thing and one in six would vote to leave, according to a survey compiled by EU statisticians.

Although nearly two thirds of the 16,300 people questioned across all 15 member states would still vote to remain in the EU, for the first time the percentage supporting the principle of the EU has dropped below 50 per cent.

## Minister orders adoption review to reduce 'unacceptable' delays

David Brindley, Social Services Correspondent

ALL local authority adoption services must be reviewed, ministers said yesterday after inspectors found unacceptable delays in procedures.

Scrutiny of six sample authorities found that almost one in four children for adoption had to wait more than three years for placement. More than half of all children aged six to 10 were unplaced after three years.

Delays in adoption arose from prolonged court proceedings, overlong assessment processes and inadequate monitoring of children and adopters.

ready to adopt children from specific age groups." The British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering said it believed delays in arranging placements occurred because some authorities were reluctant to look outside their own areas for suitable adopters.

## Scientists claim BSE advance

Tim Radford Science Editor

US SCIENTISTS believe they have unravelled some of the mystery of how a sporadic encephalopathy (BSE) and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD). They have traced the way a maverick protein in the brain might turn other proteins off.

Simply broken down by digestive juices: a rogue version survives cooking and digestion and gets into the nervous system via the spleen. But what puzzled scientists was how a simple change could cause a number of different diseases.

Professor Prusiner and colleagues at Case Western University in Cleveland, Ohio, report in the US journal, *Science*, today that they have an answer.

The implication is that prions are "alive" and replicate themselves. But this is where the controversy still lies: it also implies a form of life that does not use DNA. Some biologists are not likely to be convinced.

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Window shopping... A London toy store's dancing snowmen catch the eye of a potential customer PHOTOGRAPH BY LYNE SLADY

# Unlawful sale of homes by second Tory council

James Meikle, Community Affairs Editor

**A** SECOND Conservative council was yesterday found guilty of operating an unlawful housing sales policy, sparking Labour attempts to link the Government to the affair.

The District Auditor, Rowland Little, ruled that the London borough of Wandsworth "misdirected itself in law" by selling empty flats instead of offering them to the homeless. But he found no evidence of wilful misconduct by individuals. The Opposition leapt on the report, linking it to the "homes for votes" scandal in nearby Westminster, where another auditor in June decided to surcharge its former leader, Lady Shirley Porter, and five others,

nearly £32 million for "gerrymandering" in eight key wards, a decision they are to challenge in the courts.

Labour called for an "unreserved apology" from Sir Paul Beresford, junior environment minister who was formerly leader of Wandsworth, although he had left before the decisions that sparked the inquiry.

Mr Little, a partner with the accountants, Binder Hamlyn, said decisions in 1992 by the south London authority to declare new areas for its voluntary sales policy were unlawful. They were based on a flawed report from officers, which failed to take into account duties to the homeless, the effect of an increased sales programme on them and those in medical or social need, the size of properties marked for sale, or the financial consequences.

There was no consideration of "red-lining" problems experienced by former tenants and other buyers, as mortgage lenders proved reluctant to provide money on properties with severe maintenance problems.

Mr Little said the officers' report "served to undermine the decision-making process".

The council should have formulated a policy that balanced its desire to extend home ownership with duties to the homeless. But Mr Little found "no evidence that the council's voluntary sales policy was adopted for an improper purpose or took into account an irrelevant consideration, namely the electoral advantage of the majority party, as alleged by the objectors."

His report said the policy operated by Wandsworth between the mid-80s

and 1992 would have meant the loss of a maximum of 5,227 homes for rent.

Labour admitted the council had since changed its policies. But Hilary Armstrong, shadow local government spokesman, said: "The people of Wandsworth deserve an explanation and unreserved apology from the current council's leadership and from Sir Paul Beresford."

Sir Paul, housing policy chairman from 1980 to 1983 and leader from then to May 1992, is in Italy on government business. An aide said Wandsworth had received legal advice that differed from Mr Little's conclusion, and that his report accused no individual of misconduct. Edward Lister, present council leader, said: "The council has at all times acted reasonably based on a proper regard for its legal powers and duties."

## Moral education 'could lead to improved exam results'

Donald MacLeod, Education Correspondent

**M**ORAL education in schools could improve pupils' exam results, Nicholas Tate, the Government's chief curriculum adviser, said yesterday.

As part of a national statement of values drawn up for the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, schools will be urged to promote marriage as the ideal for family life. This follows an earlier draft by a national

forum of church and faith bodies and other organisations that was criticised by Christian groups and Tory politicians for failing to specify marriage in its statement of support for families.

Asked about the potential effect on schools of the statement of values, Mr Tate, the authority's chief executive, said the four countries that came top in a recent international comparison of maths and science performance — Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and Singapore — all had moral education in the curriculum.

"Countries that have explicit moral education in their curriculum seem to be performing extremely well academically," he said. "Schools not doing well are often those where a clear statement of values and attitudes is not being promoted."

Next month the national forum will be asked to approve a new version of the values statement including: "We as a society should support marriage as the traditional form of family whilst recognising that the love and commitment required for a

secure and happy childhood can be found in families of other kinds."

A national poll and survey of organisations found strong backing for the statement. There was a consensus in society on what our core moral values were, said Mr Tate. "Schools can be certain that in moral education based upon this framework of values, they are strongly supported by society in general."

The values would not be part of the national curriculum, but there would be a model syllabus schools could use.

## Hunt for IRA 'bomb' lorry

Police appeal to trace Ford Iveco used to move explosives

Vivek Chaudhary

**P**OLICE last night appealed for information about a 7.5 tonne Ford Iveco lorry which they said had been used to transport bomb-making equipment around Britain.

The appeal came after police raided a lorry yard in north-west London on Monday. Commander John Grieve, head of the Anti-Terrorist Branch, said the yard had "been clearly used by the Provisional IRA". The lorry was thought to have been in the IRA's possession since February.

"We believe the lorry was used at some stage to transport bomb-making equipment — possibly innocently. On the other hand, it may be part of the terrorists' transport." It was described as white with blue curtain sides and had the remnants of faded, unreadable sign-writing on the cab doors. Bars under the platform and the bumper were red. It may have a C or D



A lorry similar to the IRA vehicle sought by police

registration number but originated in Ireland.

Mr Grieve said that police were particularly keen to trace the lorry's movements in June and July, when it is known to have been in the north London area.

It was unlikely that it was still being used by the IRA. The Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, yesterday appealed for public vigilance over the Christmas period.

The Social Democratic and Labour Party leader, John Hume, yesterday held talks with loyalist prisoners inside the Maze prison as part of

efforts to revive the peace process.

Mr Hume said that he had been surprised at how positive the two hours of discussions were, given the background of some of the men he met. But they had warned him that their ceasefire should not be taken for granted.

The US Congressman, Joe Kennedy, claimed that Gerry Adams has told him that he would be able to secure a permanent IRA ceasefire if Sinn Féin was given immediate entry into the all-party talks. Mr Kennedy is on a two-day visit to Belfast.

## Guardian tops 'leaks' list as report refutes Heseltine bid to cite Labour

Richard Norton-Taylor

**T**HE Guardian has been disclosed as the leading recipient by far of Whitehall leaks over the past two years. A Cabinet Office paper, drawn up at the request of the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, shows that 24 of the 70 leaks were first published in this newspaper.

Mr Heseltine ordered the Cabinet Office to produce a report after MPs asked him to back up his allegation that politically motivated Labour supporters were responsible for a Whitehall "leak culture".

The report has identified 430 Whitehall leaks since 1980, but does not substantiate Mr Heseltine's claims. "Civil servants are not the only people who have had the opportunity, or the motive, to have been responsible," it says. It makes no reference to Labour-supporting civil servants.

In a note to the Commons public service committee, Mr Heseltine has told it to "disregard" claims he made last week that a Labour candidate leaked documents while she was in the Treasury — a mistake described by John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader, as a "humiliating climbdown".

Sir Robin Butler, the Cabinet Secretary and head of the Civil Service, also refused to endorse Mr Heseltine's claims that leaks were all politically inspired. He pointed

## Who's leaking to who

Documents leaked between 14/10/94 and 5/12/96 include:

Leaked to...	Leaked from...
The Guardian (24)	Dept of Social Security (13)
The Independent (9)	Cabinet Office (12)
Daily Mirror (5)	Ministry of Defence (8)
Sunday Times (5)	Dept of Environment (4)
The Observer (2)	DTI (4)
Daily Telegraph (2)	Treasury (4)
Daily Mail (1)	Foreign Office (3)
BBC (1)	Dept of Transport (2)
Independent on Sunday (1)	
Mail on Sunday (1)	

Source: Cabinet Office

out that 70 per cent of the documents were leaked directly to the media, without any Labour Party involvement.

However, Whitehall officials yesterday accused Mr Heseltine, and Tory MEP Graham Mather, of a concerted attempt to smear the Civil Service after Mr Mather produced a report based on con-

futerised searches of newspaper articles for the word "leak", claiming civil servants had leaked 80 sensitive documents this year.

Jonathan Baume, general secretary-designate of the First Division Association, which represents top civil servants, called the exercise "completely bogus".

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Jane Díaz-Limaco in Lima reports on the costly repercussions of Peru's hostage crisis

# Fujimori policy backfires

THE Peruvian rebel seizure of the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima is a personal blow for the country's maverick president, Alberto Fujimori.

By choosing the residence of this particular country's chief envoy, the Tupac Amaru rebels have taken into account Mr Fujimori's Japanese roots and his close links with the country, which he has visited several times since taking office for his first term in 1990.

Mr Fujimori has always played up the fact that he is of Japanese emigré stock, adopting his popular nickname "El Chino" and saying that people of Japanese descent stand for hard work, austerity and honesty.

The rebels may therefore have hoped that Mr Fujimori, who generally shuns Lima's cocktail party circuit, might have made an exception to attend the official reception in honour of the Japanese emperor — the occasion when

the guerrillas struck on Tuesday night.

He did not, but the president's mother, Matsue, and his sister, Juana, were at the party and were released by rebels with groups of women on Tuesday night. Mr Fujimori's brother, Pedro, is among the hundreds of hostages inside the residence.

Now the rebels' demand for the release of imprisoned Tupac Amaru members threatens to knock down one of the pillars of Mr Fujimori's government programme.

Since 1992, his government has been characterised by its hard line on suspected rebels. Human rights groups have been angered because it has regularly preferred to assume guilt rather than innocence of suspects.

Citing rebel violence and court judicial impotence because of corruption and fear as the main reasons for his 1992 coup, Mr Fujimori suspended constitutional guarantees and introduced a new court system for suspected

rebels. Most of the higher ranking rebels were tried by military courts in almost summary trials. Masked judges presided over all subversion cases.

The prison regime for convicted rebels is harsh. Those considered leading rebels are forbidden visits for a year after that they are allowed one short visit a month from

rebel prison population rose to more than 5,000, although human rights groups claimed about 600 were innocent.

It seems unlikely that Mr Fujimori will accept the face-to-face negotiations demanded by the rebel group as this would undermine his no-holds-barred approach.

The designation of the education minister, Domingo Pa-

prestige in a year in which he has been sliding in opinion polls.

The hostage crisis is also threatening Peru's carefully rebuilt international relations and recovering tourism industry.

Mr Fujimori has just secured acceptance of Peru as a full member of the Asian Pacific Economic Co-operation Forum (Apec) with Japanese support. The government had also succeeded in rescheduling its Paris Club Debt and finalised terms with commercial bank debtors on money owed since 1984.

The seizure of the ambassador's residence also threatens Japanese state employees in Peru. Tokyo withdrew all its aid workers after an attack by Shining Path guerrillas in 1991 that killed three Japanese agricultural aid workers. Other Japanese targets, including restaurants and a cultural centre, were also bombed at the height of the rebel insurgency in the early 1990s.

The decline in political violence since the Shining Path leader, Abimael Guzman, was captured in September 1992 had gradually wooed back the Japanese.

Although Japanese investment and trade have never reached the proportions that some Peruvians expected when they elected Mr Fujimori, Japanese aid to Peru since 1990 totals \$2.2 billion (about £1.3 billion).

A sharp slide of 4 per cent on the all-share index of the Lima stock exchange on Wednesday, forcing trading to be suspended, underlined the risks associated with foreign investment in emerging economies.

The international concern aroused by the hostage crisis will harm another Fujimori goal of fuelling growth in tourism.

A sociologist, Fernando Rospigliosi, said: "Whatever the outcome of the crisis, the results are going to be very negative for Peru. We have all lost."

## 'Whatever the outcome of the crisis... we have all lost in Peru'

one relative. They are allowed out of their cells for half an hour a day and denied outside reading material like newspapers.

Mr Fujimori's tough stand produced results helped by a law in 1993 that offered more lenient sentences or protection to rebels who turned themselves in, on the condition that they identify other guerrillas.

Under Mr Fujimori, the

### News in brief

## Bhutto's husband on murder charge

THE husband of Benazir Bhutto, the ousted prime minister of Pakistan, has been charged with masterminding the murder of her brother, Murtaza Bhutto, authorities said yesterday.

The charge against Asif Ali Zardari was made shortly after a Sindh high court ordered him to be freed from jail, where he has been held since his wife's government was dismissed in November. He was still in custody when the charge was filed.

Murtaza Bhutto, who had become a political rival of his sister, was shot dead outside his home in southern Karachi on September 20. He had established a breakaway faction of the Pakistan People's Party, but was not considered a real threat to Ms Bhutto's political survival. — AP, Karachi.

## Rao quits as Congress chief

THE former Indian prime minister, P. V. Narasimha Rao, yesterday stepped down as leader of the Congress (I) party's parliamentary delegation, his last party post, amid a flurry of corruption charges.

Mr Rao, who was prime minister from 1991 until May this year, served an ultimatum to quit by the Congress president, Sitaram Kesri, after parliamentary deputies passed an unprecedented resolution on Wednesday asking him to resign in the interest of party unity. Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda's shaky United Front coalition depends on Congress for support.

Commentators say Congress leaders such as Sharad Pawar, widely seen as the main contender along with Mr Kesri to succeed Mr Rao, lack the appeal to consolidate the party. Mr Rao, aged 75, has been charged in three separate corruption cases which he denies any wrongdoing. — Reuters, New Delhi.

## California scouts accept gays

THE scout movement's 86-year-old ban on homosexuals has been ditched by a California branch, prompting a nationwide row in the United States.

The San Francisco Bay Area scout council decided to welcome homosexuals, so long as they do not "openly advocate" a gay lifestyle. Scout leaders in the region said the new rules were in line with existing national guidelines — which do not include questioning of potential members or leaders about their sexual orientation — and that their aim was simply to make scouting "sexual and apolitical".

But national officials, who have been busy fielding calls from parents across the US, insisted the ban on openly gay men and boys — in place since the movement's foundation by Baden Powell in 1908 — remained in force. "Nothing has changed," said a spokesman. — Richard Thomas, Washington.

## Backing for H-bomb veterans

RESEARCH into the effects on New Zealand veterans of British hydrogen bomb tests is to go ahead after their government confirmed it would provide \$20,000 to help sue Britain.

The cash will allow the NZ Test Veterans Association to explore legal channels to claim compensation for injuries it claims were due to tests at Christmas Island in 1957 and 1958. The association intends to bring a joint action on behalf of its 370 members, a mixture of veterans and veterans' widows.

The grant came as final details were announced of a coalition agreement drawn up by the National Party and NZ First, whose leader Winston Peters is believed to be behind the move.

There was, however, no mention of the agreement ushering in a referendum on New Zealand becoming a republic, an idea which had been touted last week. It is thought the subject has been dropped. — Giles Wilson, Wellington.

## Mother Teresa back home

MOTHER TERESA walked out of hospital in India yesterday, three weeks after her third heart operation in five years.

The 86-year-old Nobel peace prize winner made her way out of Calcutta's BM Birla Heart Research Centre unaided. Smiling, with her hands clasped together in the traditional Indian greeting, she bowed to the crowd outside and climbed into a car.

Sisters ring the chapel bell as she was carried up steps into her Missionaries of Charity order. Nuns crowded around her, applauding singing and dancing.

Doctors praised Mother Teresa's recovery. "On at least four occasions she was almost dead, but she pulled herself up," said Dr Patricia Aubanel. — Reuters, Calcutta.

## Woman sues fake husband

AN American woman has begun legal proceedings against her husband after discovering he is a woman. Margaret Hunter married her partner, Thorne Groves, after a whirlwind romance which began on the Internet.

Mr Groves had claimed to be a businessman seeking love before he died of AIDS, and the two did not have sex because of his alleged condition. But after four months of marriage Ms Hunter became suspicious when her husband's health did not appear to worsen and he continued to wear heavy bandages across his chest — which he had claimed were necessary after a car accident.

After making birth certificate and passport checks, she discovered he was really Holly Groves, a Texas woman.

Ms Hunter is suing Ms Groves for \$575,000, (\$340,000) alleging fraud and misrepresentation. She wants the court to order repayment of money she spent on food, shelter, transportation, telephone calls and cable TV during the relationship. — Washington Post.

## Pope welcomes Arafat

THE Pope received the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, yesterday at the Vatican where they discussed the Middle East peace process and tensions in Jerusalem. Mr Arafat also held talks with Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican's foreign minister.

"There was an exchange of news and views about the way the Middle East peace process is going," a Vatican statement said. "Particular attention was paid to the climate of tension and suffering in the Arab part of Jerusalem." — Reuters, Vatican City.



## Santa's mail hit by cutbacks

SEASONAL spirit is in short supply at post offices in Iceland and Greenland, where sackloads of letters to Santa are going unanswered because of government cuts.

Siri Kveiter of the Santa Claus of Greenland Foundation said many of the 130,000 letters addressed to "Santa Claus, North Pole, Greenland" had been dumped because government subsidies had run out. In Iceland, letters are being thrown away due to cash shortages at the tourist board, which used to fund replies.

But there are no such problems in Norway, Sweden and Finland, where government sponsorship continues to allow responses to more than a million letters. — John Henley, Helsinki.

## Anger as war crimes erased

Larry Rohter in Guatemala City

AS GUATEMALA ends a 36-year civil war in which at least 100,000 people were killed, the country's congress has approved a sweeping amnesty law to exempt soldiers and guerrillas from prosecution for killings, kidnappings and acts of torture committed during the conflict.

The amnesty — one of the broadest adopted by a country emerging from civil war — has prompted angry protests from human rights groups and relatives of victims.

Guatemala will not require either government or guerrilla combatants to acknowledge any wrongdoing to avoid prosecution — unlike, for example, a comparable process in South Africa which seeks to establish accountability for acts of violence.

The amnesty establishes a truth commission, although it will not be allowed to name those who committed atrocities and is unlikely to be able to bring criminal charges.

Despite being longtime enemies, the country's armed forces and the leftwing Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity guerrilla army strongly support the amnesty.

With a final peace accord to end the war scheduled to be signed on December 29, legislators moved to limit debate so that they could rush to a vote on Wednesday.

Local politicians defend the amnesty as the only way to put aside hatred and move towards democracy in a country exhausted and devastated by civil war.

"You can't demand the head of everyone," said Mario Flores Ortiz, the majority leader in the national assembly. He said his own father had been killed by guerrillas.

But human rights leaders and relatives of victims complain that the terms of the amnesty will prevent more bitterness — not reconciliation.

"All of us who had nothing to do with this armed conflict but have loved ones who fell victim to it are totally opposed to this extremely broad amnesty," said Karen Fischer, a Guatemalan lawyer who heads the Alliance Against Impunity, a coalition of human rights, religious and indigenous groups fighting the measure.

"The attitude is one of erasing the page and starting all over again, and that is simply unacceptable because we cannot tolerate impunity."

Human rights groups estimate that at least 100,000 people died in the civil war, which reached its violent peak in early 1980. — New York Times.



Brigitte Bardot arrives in court yesterday, accompanied by her husband Bernard D'Ormale, a National Front adviser

## Brigitte Bardot denies race hatred charge

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

HUNDREDS of Brigitte Bardot fans shouted "bon courage" and "good luck B!" when the former actress arrived at a Paris court yesterday to face a charge of racism.

Ms Bardot was being sued by anti-racism groups for "provoking racial discrimination and hatred" in two newspaper articles earlier this year.

In the rightwing Le Figaro, on April 28, the 62-year-old animal rights campaigner wrote: "My grandfather and father fought courageously against German oppression and invasion in two world wars. Now... France, my fatherland, is once again invaded, with the blessing of our leaders, by an overpopulation of foreigners, notably Muslims."

Ms Bardot, who draws support from the racist

National Front, threatened to leave France because she disapproved of Muslim slaughter practices.

In the article, published during *Aid-al-Adha* — the Muslim commemoration of Abraham — she wrote: "Ritual slaughters, often carried out illegally, are turning abattoirs into chambers of horror where animals — our animals — face torture worthy of the most atrocious pagan sacrifices."

The complaint against Ms Bardot was brought by three groups. Their lawyer, Stéphane Meyer, said he was looking for a public apology aimed at "anyone who felt hurt or offended by the article".

After appearing in Le Figaro, the article was reprinted on May 9 in National Hebdo, a National Front tabloid weekly.

Ms Bardot, whose recently published memoirs have become the best-

selling book in France this decade, told a packed court: "I am not a politician. I am not a racist. The only banner I fight under is the love of animals."

She drew applause from the public gallery when she asked: "Why should it be that people who come over here are allowed to go to the front of the queue, ahead of people I know living on the minimum wage?" Judgment was reserved until January 23.

## German troops forge new role in Bosnia

David Fairhall Defence Correspondent

NEW Nato-led force today takes responsibility for restoring peace in Bosnia with a bigger German contribution — for the first time including armoured combat units — but much smaller contingents from most other countries.

Britain is sending 5,000 troops, it was announced yesterday, a substantial reduction from earlier levels of 12,000 and the current 6,000. That should cut the taxpayer's annual bill from €335 million to €170 million.

The new force has been named S-For or "stabilisation" force more in hope than from a conviction that it can achieve political stability in the 18 months allocated to it. In spite of much brave talk at recent ministerial meetings, S-For will not be empowered to arrest the 74 indicted war criminals in former Yugoslavia, ministerial officials said.

Officials said that a White House meeting this week

slow start. There is already ominous talk in Nato circles of the need for yet another multinational force, albeit with a quite different mandate and composition, to follow in 1998.

The main differences between I-For, which has been in Bosnia for the past year, and S-For are a reduction in overall size, from 55,000 to 30,000 troops, the creation of genuine military reserves and the transfer of the south-east sector of Bosnia to joint Franco-German command.

The German defence minister, Volker Rühle, was adamant that his troops should play a more active role now

that constitutional restraints on overseas operations have largely been removed, in spite of the brutal record left by Hitler's occupying troops in the former Yugoslavia.

Whereas the German contribution to I-For was confined to logistic and medical units in Croatia, the Bundeswehr is now sending two armoured infantry battalions as part of its 3,000-strong contingent. Germany is also providing the chief of staff for a Franco-German headquarters in south-east Bosnia drawn largely from the multinational Eurocorps headquarters in Strasbourg.

Two battalions of Russian

airborne troops will continue to operate with the Americans in northern Bosnia, along with Nordic and Turkish units. Seventeen non-Nato nations are contributing, with the newcomers including Albania, Bulgaria and Lithuania.

In Sarajevo, Britain is providing a deputy, Lieutenant-General Roderick Cordy. Simpson, to the Nato commander, US General William Crouch, who runs the whole operation. Britain retains command from Banja Luka of the south-western sector, where the force includes Canadian, Czech, Dutch and Malaysian units.

The two major components of the British battle groups, the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards and the 1st Battalion, the Green Howards, equipped with Challenger tanks and Warrior armoured vehicles respectively, are already in place. Engineering and signals units are being withdrawn as British numbers decline from 6,000 to 5,000 over the next five weeks.

Retaining some tanks, with American Apache attack helicopters on call in Sarajevo, is symptomatic of S-For's determination to stamp hard on any outbreaks of fighting as the winter snows recede. I-For's "robust" rules of engagement have been relaxed hardly at all. But operations will be reviewed every six months, and if progress is good, some of the troops could be withdrawn before the 18 months are up, and others based outside the region as a residual deterrent.

Air and naval units are in any case available in Italy, where the RAF will retain six Harriers and a pair of airborne radar aircraft.

WASHINGTON is drawing up plans for a US-led paramilitary force to capture suspects indicted on war crimes charges in the former Yugoslavia, senior officials said.

Officials said that a White House meeting this week

agreed to draw up military options for the president to decide whether the United States should go ahead, either alone or with other countries, with what would be a risky intervention.

A paramilitary police force would work under the

auspices of the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague, which has the legal authority to capture indicted war criminals, while the Nato troops would secure areas and provide support. — The New York Times.

After all these years, the musical can still surprise. Derek Malcolm

Friday Review p6

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# Film awards turn spotlight on Britain

Jan Katz in New York

**T**HE English Patient, the epic screen adaptation of Michael Ondaatje's 1992 Booker Prize winning novel, emerged as clear Oscar favourite yesterday after sweeping the nominations for the Golden Globes, the film prizes which are considered a reliable predictor of Academy Award winners.

The lavish two-and-a-half hour production, set in the Sahara and war-torn Italy, won a nomination in the best dramatic picture category, as well as nods for its leading man and woman, Ralph Fiennes and Kristin Scott Thomas. It collected a total of seven nominations, two more than any other film.

Mike Leigh's critically acclaimed Secrets and Lies was also shortlisted for best dramatic picture, with two members of its cast, Brenda Blethyn and Miranda Richardson, picking up nominations for their performances.

Evita, the relentlessly hyped adaptation of the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical starring the world's most famous single mum, and Shine, the story of the Australian piano prodigy David Helfgott, were also favoured when the Golden Globes shortlists were announced early yesterday in Beverly Hills.

Both films received five nominations, as did The People vs Larry Flynt, Milos Forman's film on the life of the Hustler publisher and self-styled guardian of free speech who was left paralysed by an attempt on his life.

The English Patient was adapted and directed by Anthony Minghella, the screenwriter and director behind the successful dark comedy, Truly, Madly, Deeply. He received a best director nomination yesterday while Juliette Binoche was named in the best supporting actress category.

Although Mr Minghella and most of the cast of The English Patient are British,

the film was funded by New York-based Miramax after 20th Century Fox dropped out of the project. It has been a surprise box office hit in the United States, grossing more than \$14 million (about £2.7 million) in four weeks of release.

The film tells the story of Count Laszlo de Almásy, a Hungarian count and explorer, played by Mr Fiennes and based on a real historical character. Almásy suffers appalling burns when his plane is shot down over North Africa and winds up in an Allied military hospital in Italy.

The story fits between Italy, where the dying man and amnesiac count is lovingly cared for by a Canadian military nurse (Juliette Binoche), and pre-war North Africa, where he had earlier had a torrid and doomed affair with the beautiful wife of an English spy (Kristin Scott Thomas).

The Golden Globes are awarded by the 90 members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, mostly relatively unknown foreign journalists who show up with notorious regularity on Hollywood junkets.

Nevertheless, the Golden Globes, the winners of which will be announced on January 19, are closely watched as an indicator of which films will do well at the Oscars the following month.

Madonna was nominated for best actress in a musical for her performance as Eva Peron in Evita, while fellow chanteuse, Barbra Streisand, was shortlisted for her performance in The Mirror has Two Faces. Another pop star turned actress, Courteney Love, was named for her performance in the People vs Larry Flynt.

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# House of secrets and lies



A letter found by his wife in their Virginia home (above) led to Earl Edwin Pitts (right), an FBI agent, being charged with selling secrets to Moscow. MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: SCOTT BROWN

# Spy's wife who put her country first

Richard Serrano in Washington

**M**ARY PITTS had one choice and no choice: her country or her husband. As an FBI support clerk, she became suspicious that her husband, Earl Edwin Pitts, a career supervisory agent with the bureau, might be compromising their employer: the United States.

She found a letter he left behind in their rural Virginia home that FBI investigators say indicated her husband might be swapping secrets for cash from the Russians. But she did not know that top FBI authorities already suspected him of spying for the former Soviet Union during his posting in the New York field office in the late 1960s.

Nor did she realise that the letter was part of an undercover sting operation by the FBI to determine how much further her husband might bend to make money at the expense of his country.

Mrs Pitts wrestled with her dilemma. She decided to notify fellow FBI officials of her suspicions. Then, she embarked on whether she

had compromised her marriage.

In one of many telephone transcripts the FBI provided as part of its criminal affidavit against her husband, she told a neighbour: "I probably shouldn't have gone to the bureau. It will probably be the end of my marriage either way it goes. Because if he is on the up-and-up and he finds out that I went behind his back, we're finished."

She struggled further with what the consequences would be for her future. "Could I have gone on with my regular and wonderful life?" she asked, according to the affidavit transcripts. No, she concluded. "It's over. My life is over."

After Earl Edwin Pitts, aged 43, was arrested on Wednesday morning at his post at the FBI's training academy in Quantico, Virginia, Louis Freeh, director of the FBI, stressed that Mrs Pitts was not a suspect in the nearly 16-month undercover operation.

Rather, he said, the investigation was "certainly enhanced by the statements" she ultimately gave to the bureau to boost the FBI's case. Mr Freeh said she had

since left the bureau, but declined to say why.

When the undercover investigation began in August 1985, a former Soviet official assigned to his country's United Nations mission — who by then was secretly working as a "co-operating witness" for the FBI — turned up at the Pitts home to see Earl. It was the first contact of the undercover operation, and it immediately aroused her suspicions.

The affidavit against her husband says Mrs Pitts telephoned her sister three times that day, telling her "a man with a foreign accent came to the house" and asked for her husband, who had suddenly left home "in a panic".

She searched his home office while he was away and found damaging evidence: a letter sent earlier from New York in which the undercover agents tried to start their espionage relationship with Mr Pitts.

When he returned home, she confronted him, the affidavit says. It does not record how he responded. But later that day, Mrs Pitts's sister asked her on the phone if the letter included "the secret stuff". Mrs Pitts said it did.



After three days of angst, Mrs Pitts telephoned Tom Carter, the FBI's resident agent in Fredericksburg, near her home. She asked to meet him on an "urgent and confidential matter concerning her husband", the affidavit says.

They talked for an hour and she gave him statements about her husband's suspicious activities that day. Then she handed over a copy of the letter.

Later that day she talked by phone to a neighbour. The conversation, quoted in the affidavit, shows her uncertainty about whether she had done the right thing.

She later told her husband about the meeting and he met Mr Carter. The affidavit says Mr Pitts told Mr Carter that

the man visiting their home was a former intelligence agent whom he had known when he was assigned to the New York field office in the late 1960s. Mr Pitts verified the letter, but he insisted the man had been drunk when he showed up at their door.

Mr Pitts, who is also a lawyer, said he met the man at a local Wal-Mart near his home and gave him legal advice. But "these statements were false", the affidavit says. Instead, prosecutors allege that Mr Pitts met with the "co-operating witness" at a nearby civil war battlefield site and received \$15,000 (about \$9,000) in the first of an eventual \$85,000 pay-out in the undercover arrangement. — Los Angeles Times.

# End for China's last eunuch

Mure Dickie in Beijing

**C**HINA'S last imperial eunuch has died in Beijing at the age of 93, after a life that spanned the end of a dynasty and a communist revolution which made a mockery of his castration.

Sun Yaoting, who served in the court of China's last emperor for seven years, died on Tuesday at his home in a Beijing temple, his biographer Jia Yiqing said yesterday.

His remains were laid out in traditional style at Beijing's Guangshou temple. Sun's genitals were removed eight years after he was born, in 1902, by his father, who was eager to wield power through a son in the court of China's Qing emperor, Mr Jia said.

The Qing dynasty was swept away after it had ruled China for almost three centuries.

After Emperor Pu Yi was stripped of his imperial title in 1911, Sun continued to serve him during the final years of his residence in the Forbidden City.

He was appointed to administer Beijing's temples when the communist revolutionaries swept to power in 1949. Sun's memory faded in 1966 when Mao Zedong launched the Cultural Revolution. Sun was an early victim of the Red Guards, who criticised anything tainted by the feudal past.

He was sent back to his home village, where he lost his genitals. He had been preserved using traditional methods.

"They were thrown away by his family," Mr Jia said. "They were afraid of being implicated if the genitals were found by the Red Guards."

According to Buddhist beliefs, a eunuch has to be buried with his penis to ensure successful reincarnation as a man.

"He used to joke about it," Mr Jia said. "He said, 'When I die I will come back as a cat or a dog.'"

Sun's adopted son and grandson were due to take his place in his home village for further ceremonies today before having them cremated in Beijing, Mr Jia said. — Reuters.

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# 300 die in Somalia week of war

Greg Barrow in Nairobi

**F**RACTIONAL fighting has dragged the people of Somalia's capital back to the darkest days of the civil war in 1992.

International aid agencies estimate that up to 300 people, mostly civilians, have been killed in less than a week of fighting in Mogadishu, although no warlord has made significant territorial gains.

"The intensity of the fighting has shocked even Mogadishu's battle-hardened population: in one incident, almost 40 people were killed when three mortar bombs landed in the crowded Bakaarah market.

Militiamen have abandoned their machine-gun-mounted pick-up trucks, known as "technicals", and, in an alarming change of tactics, have started using heavy artillery to bombard rival militia positions.

"The situation in Mogadishu is very grave," said Fred Grimm, the Somalia delegate for the International Committee of the Red Cross. "The fighting is damaging the over-

all living conditions of the population.

"We already have a very difficult situation — the main port has been closed now for one and a half years, job opportunities are very low, and the coping mechanisms of a large part of the population are becoming more and more feeble."

The latest upsurge in fighting comes as the United Nations appeal for aid and relief projects in Somalia, which is entering its sixth year without a central authority or government.

International observers say the new conflict can be traced back to July, when the most powerful warlord, General Mohamed Farah Aideded, was killed in a militia gunfight in Mogadishu.

He was succeeded by his son, Hussein, a former United States marine regarded by many Somalis as too young and inexperienced to affect the situation.

"I think what we are seeing now is a marginalisation of Aideded's supporters, and especially his son, Hussein Aideded," said one foreign se-

curity source who travels frequently to Mogadishu. "Most of the other faction leaders are now bitterly opposed to Hussein Aideded."

"We're still in a situation where no single warlord is powerful enough to take control, but if the Aideded faction is faced with a strong alliance of other clan leaders, it'll begin to struggle."

A green line divides north Mogadishu, controlled by Ali Mahdi Mohammed of the Abgal clan, from the south, controlled by Mr Aideded's Habar-Gidir sub-clan.

The fighting flared when Mr Aideded's militia tried to move into the Medina enclave in south Mogadishu, a densely populated area occupied by Abgal clan leader, Musa Sade Yalabow, who is closely allied to Mr Mohammed in the north and Osman Ali Atto in the south.

Mr Aideded's advance, which dragged all three of his most bitter opponents in Mogadishu into the fighting, took place as all the other faction leaders were in Ethiopia to discuss a plan to bring about national reconciliation and set up a transitional govern-

ment. The talks are backed by both the UN and the US.

Mr Aideded has been offered a seat on a committee of the faction leaders set up to resolve the five-year conflict, but Mr Aideded has refused to participate in the Ethiopia peace talks. His hardline supporters say Somalia already has a government with Mr Aideded as its head of state.

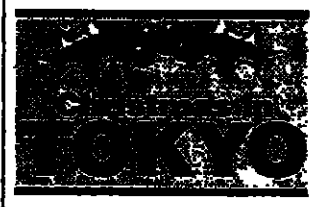
At the same time, however, the Aideded faction is desperately scrambling for support from armed groups which have previously played little part in the Mogadishu conflict.

"Aideded must be careful. He doesn't realise how quickly things are moving on the ground," said one foreign aid representative. "He is losing support and his opponents are getting stronger."

"Even now you are hearing that Aideded is trying to build bridges with the Somali Islamic fundamentalist group Al-Urshad, which has carried out terrorist attacks in Ethiopia over the last year."

"It is a dangerous development, and it leaves no opening for peace and reconciliation."

# Santa dresses up as Cupid for sad singles



Jonathan Watts

**J**UST 10 days left until Christmas Eve. Does anybody have any plans? No? Well, perhaps tonight you can meet someone with whom to share the most romantic evening of the year.

The compère was addressing 200 single men and women at one of the many "coupling parties" in Tokyo in the run-up to Christmas — which in Japan is associated as much with Cupid as with Christ.

Each guest paid 10,000 yen (about £25) to attend the "precious executive" coupling party, where men

who earn more than 10 million yen and female college graduates have a chance to meet.

For-U, the organiser, was running eight other parties in Tokyo the same evening and dozens more the following week. "We organise events throughout the year, but this is always our busiest season," said Tesai Kobayashi, its director. "It is not easy to meet members of the opposite sex in Japan, but everybody wants to find a date in time for Christmas Eve."

Although less than 1 per cent of Japan's population is Christian, the country has a long tradition of religious pick 'n' mix. It is quite common for a person to have their birth sanctified with Shinto rites, their marriage celebrated in a Christian ceremony and their death commemorated with Buddhist rituals.

Christmas, likewise, has been integrated into Japanese culture, but with a commercial spin. The editor of Jaran, an events and

travel magazine, said: "For decades we celebrated Christmas as in the West — as a time for the family to get together. But in the 1970s a series of new publications aimed at young people emphasised the romantic nature of the season."

"That proved to be a successful marketing concept and it really took off during the consumer boom of the late 1980s."

Falling to find a partner for Christmas Eve is portrayed as a social disaster by the media. One television station recently broadcast a programme entitled: "Which of these women looks like she is going to spend the most miserable Christmas?"

For some it is all too much. Shoko Kawashita, an unmarried career woman, said she had decided to escape: "I can't stand this time of year in Japan. I have booked a ticket and plan, like last year, to spend Christmas in Africa."

# News in brief

## Rafsanjani gets warm welcome

Brushing aside warnings from the United States against forming closer ties with Iran, Turkey's Islamic government warmly welcomed President Hashemi Rafsanjani for a three-day visit yesterday.

He was greeted at Ankara airport by President Suleyman Demirel and received full military honours. — AP.

## Hunziker 'suicide'

Less than a month after basking in the Thanksgiving glow of his release from North Korea, where he was held as a spy and threatened with execution, Evan Hunziker, aged 23, was found dead in a rundown hotel in Tacoma, Washington, with a bullet in his head. It is believed he committed suicide. — New York Times.

## Missile warning

The leader of a United Nations team in charge of destroying Iraqi weapons has told the Security Council that he believes Baghdad may be hiding more operational missiles than previously suspected. — New York Times.



Prince Philip is wrong
And the dignity of the monarchy is undermined

NO ONE who heard or who reads Prince Philip's attack on gun curbs can doubt for a moment that he meant exactly what he said. These remarks were not some intemperate off-the-cuff answer to an unexpected question, as apologists of the embarrassed shooting lobby tried to pretend yesterday. They arose out of an extended interview discussion about shooting and the current Firearms Bill, and the Prince then repeated and amplified them in the course of further exchanges. They are quite obviously a mature representation of his genuine views. The weapon-toting Prince, a man who truthfully embodies many of the natural instincts of his social class, believes that tighter gun control is unnecessary and undesirable, irrespective of Dunblane or of public outrage.

The Prince's remarks were wrong, ill-judged and inappropriate. Tighter gun control will not make future Dunblanes impossible but they will make them less likely. They will indeed make life inconvenient for blameless sporting gun users, because that is a necessary means to a desirable end. To pretend with any seriousness that a crazed bad-wielding cricketer could represent as much danger as a crazed handgun-wielding shooter is absurd and insulting. For a man in the Prince's position it is also extremely insensitive. He has made himself unwelcome in Dunblane and promoted himself into a figure of controversy more generally. Given the wider difficulties of Britain's royal family, this is a pretty dumb move. He should have thought first and spoken more carefully.

Prince Philip is famous for robust and occasionally rude remarks that would often be best left unsaid. His comments seem to reveal a man who makes little effort to see past his own lifestyle and prejudices. Because he is the Queen's husband, these outbursts

reflect upon the monarchy as a whole, and there can be little doubt that this latest example undermines the monarchy's struggles to retain some dignity amid its recent travails. But it is important not to exaggerate. Prince Philip may have said something foolish, wrong and hurtful on this occasion, but it cannot be said that he is in the habit of seeking out or provoking controversy. Unlike the later generation of royals, he does very little indeed to court the media and as a result is largely left alone by them. However unattractive some of his views or language may be from time to time, he has managed to keep to the old and rather distant rules which, for good or ill, have successfully protected the monarchy in the democratic era.

He is probably not one of the world's natural Guardian readers, but at least no one can accuse Prince Philip of having any political agenda beyond the survival of the monarchy to which he has devoted nearly half a century of his life. He presides; he does not promote. Unlike his eldest son, he has never fallen into the trap of trying to make the monarchy "relevant" to the modern world. It is to his credit that he does not make many speeches, give many interviews (we can be sure there will be even fewer after this one) or agonise in public about either his private or his public life. Unlike Prince Charles again, he has not made the mistake of trying to gather around him a "Prince's Party" to promote his ideas and prejudices under the illusion that such blustering increases public respect for the monarchy. Prince Philip has said a foolish thing which has caused great distress, especially where feelings against handguns still run particularly high. As the first Christmas approaches since the Dunblane killings, you would think he would have realised that we can do without such lectures.

Evolution not dissolution

The unions will always prefer Labour to the alternative

LORD CALLAGHAN'S remark in the New Statesman that he would be "very opposed" to breaking the relationship between Labour and the unions is bound to stir up one of the last major controversies surrounding Tony Blair's post-electoral plans for the party: will he, as many traditionalists fear, sever the formal links between Labour and the movement which spawned, nurtured and bankrolled the party for so long? It depends, of course, on what is meant by "breaking". Hardly anyone years for a return to the days when the unions camped out on the steps of Downing Street trading deals with the prime minister of their day over beer and sandwiches. The unions weren't exactly representative of the mood of the country at large then and even less so now that their membership has fallen so sharply. Yesterday Mr Blair repeated his promise: "There are no favours. We treat employers and trade unions equally."

That doesn't mean that there aren't shared principles and a shared heritage because there are and probably always will be. But if Labour is to survive as a popular party, it must respond to the erosion of its traditional blue-collar base and to the thaw in the Cold War in industry. The CBI and the TUC are beginning to realise they have more in common than they supposed. They now invite each other to their annual conferences and this year jointly came out against lower income taxes in their budget submissions. Companies are

even starting to donate money to Labour. The emergence of an industrial consensus straddling both sides of industry could actually enhance the influence of the unions. It is more difficult for a government to reject a proposal endorsed by unions and industry than one merely reflecting the short-term interests of either lobby on its own.

Lord Callaghan displays commendable loyalty to a union movement which — as a result of the unpopular strikes associated with the Winter of Discontent in 1979 — ousted his government and helped to usher in 17 years of Conservative government. But his analysis of Blairism is shrewd — an attempt to synthesise what is happening in the market economy with "a growing feeling that this is not enough, that there has to be a special perspective in health and education and that we must stand against exploitation, privilege and injustice". Mr Blair could do worse than keep these words by his bedside to remind himself what he is all about. It is a matter for the unions whether they want to continue to give money to a party they can only seek to influence rather than control and which is broadening its financial base to include a bigger contribution from members and industrial donations. The answer, almost certainly, is that however much some of them harken back to the old days, the unions will invariably prefer a Labour government to the alternative. The links between Labour and the unions must evolve not dissolve.

Milking the war pensioners

John Major concedes — after the Commons has risen

THE PATTERN is familiar. First there's the crime. Then on its exposure, there is denial. Finally and belatedly there is reluctant admission. Earlier this month the Government was seriously embarrassed by our social services correspondent, who exposed the truth behind the innocuous paragraph in the budget promising simplified procedures to improve war pensions. In reality ministers were imposing a new round of cuts — only the second since war pensions were introduced in 1947 — which would leave the pensioners £50 million poorer. The Prime Minister was outraged. He described our report as misleading and inaccurate. When the issue was taken up by Tony Blair at question time, the Labour leader was accused of "shameless scaremongering" and the Prime Minister followed up this criticism with a hand delivered letter declaring: "In short, there has been no cover up and there are no cuts.

I hope you will apologise to the many pensioners in this country to whom you have given needless alarm." Then, hey presto, when Parliament had risen and no MPs were around to protest, social security ministers released a series of written answers yesterday to parliamentary questions conceding the full charge sheet. Certainly the pensioners — disabled ex-servicemen and war widows — need an apology but it would more appropriately come from the Prime Minister. Pretending a £50 million reduction in the pension package is a "simplification" is plain dishonest. No wonder the ministerial letter leaked to us talked of a "storm" and the need for "sweeteners". Other apologies are due too. Some ex-service organisations immediately signalled their readiness to resist; but others were naive in their belief in ministers and supine in their support. Members of the latter are owed an explanation.



Letters to the Editor

Islam and some bad faith

CATHERINE Bennett should be reassured by the fact that our monarchy and state are mutually exclusive and the Divine Right of Kings has been abandoned for some time now (What on earth is Prince Charles up to, December 18). Her prejudices are so scurrilous they are quite frightening for me as a Muslim born and raised in this country. It is the all too familiar demonisation of a minority group: she successfully painted a big brown boogyman.

Brutality against women is despicable but to infer that this is only inherent in Islamic culture is not only leading but is completely against Islamic law. The subjugation of women has been a global problem since the beginning of time. In this society, 99-year-olds are raped and women are afraid to travel alone.

Moreover, in the Western home of feminism, women are despised by male exploiters and the tyranny of the supermodel that they are continually reinventing themselves through dieting and surgery. Aisha Ahmed, Southpark Crescent, London SE8.

AS A Jew and a woman who fervently believes in equality, it is difficult not to despair at Catherine Bennett's prejudice. Imagine the furore that would arise if Bennett had chosen little bites from Jewish texts to criticise? Joan Margalith, Lithos Road, London NW3.

SHAIKH Omar Bakri, al-Masjid, the Gulf sheikhdoms, Taliban, Pascal and Catherine Bennett all depend on superficial readings of Islamic text to further interests alien to Islam. The Quran does not demand literalism as Ms Bennett and her pack of "Islamic" nasties would have us believe. What the Quran does demand is depth of thought. Abdurahman Jafar, Madras Road, Ilford, Essex IG1.

I COULD not agree more with Catherine Bennett. It is extremely naive of the heir to the throne to suggest that we should take on board certain aspects of Islam. It is not a "pick and choose" collection. Its followers believe that they must either subscribe to everything (medieval attitudes and barbaric practices included) or be damned to eternal hell fire as an infidel. So take your pick, Prince Charles, but don't for a minute think that you will have the majority of your subjects behind you.

Flirting with Islam is a dangerous game which does you no good. Prince Charles (Dr) Bellinda Geddes, Woodend, Styal, Cheshire SK9.

CATHERINE Bennett seems to be afflicted with the Islamophobia virus. May I offer some facts: ● If a man is given a rank above woman in Islam it does not mean that he can dominate her; rather he has additional family duties;

● When a Muslim woman marries she maintains her maiden name and her personal wealth. The husband is solely responsible for the financial support of the family. Whatever she feels is important to her happiness she can include in her marriage contract, be it the right to education, the right to divorce or any other issue; ● Punishment for adulterers is only legal if four eye-witnesses are willing to testify against the adulterer. False testimony is sanctioned with the death penalty; ● Thieves will lose their hands after being caught three times, again only if caught in the act or in possession of the stolen goods. (Dr) Fatima Martin, Hook Heath Road, Woking GU24.

WE are a development charity in regular contact with people working at grassroots level in Bangladesh and we simply do not recognise the religious and political views which Catherine Bennett ascribes to "Bangladeshi natives". The majority of Bangladeshis are indeed Muslims. In the 1980s, Islamic support for Islamic fundamentalism plummeted. The Awami League, under a woman leader, won on a platform which endorses the rights of women. Real life is not as simple as prejudice would have it. Jane Winder, Director, One World Action, 19-14 West Smithfield, London EC1A 9HY.

A bouquet of brickbats for the gun-loving Duke of Edinburgh

THE Duke of Edinburgh has raised all kind of possibilities with his proposition (Guns? No more dangerous than cricket bats says Philip, December 19). A new form of game hunting might be devised in which the aim is to knock a pheasant out of the air with a treble-sprung piece of polished willow, or even a squash racket.

The British Army could be equipped with cricket kit and hurl leather balls at the enemy. The police could tackle terrorists padded up playing a straight bat to the bullets hurled at them.

By the same token, the English cricket team could be given hand guns which might be more effective against the fast bowling of the West Indies than the traditional and out-moded wooden bat. The Duke is absolutely right: we have failed to recognise the intrinsic similarity of cricket bats and guns, and have become far too hide-bound.

Why, for example, has no British inventor produced a fast-loading, rapid-fire cricket bat? It would have to be licensed, of course, for fear it fell into the wrong hands. (Dr) Westman, 24 Highbury Grove, London N5 2EA.

HAS anyone ever managed to kill a wild stag with a cricket bat? Brian Kelly, Department of Clinical Engineering, Withington Hospital, Manchester M20 2LR.

FIND squash rackets much better than cricket bats for despatching grouse. Allan Jones, 10 Chicheley Street, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire MK16 9AP.

THE attempt by the Duke of Edinburgh to defend the gun lobby would, were his arguments not so absurd, surely be a breach of constitutional convention.

Should the Consort to the Monarch express views on such a controversial question? And particularly, should he do so at a time when the Bill in question is actually passing through the House — and might thus have its passage delayed, or otherwise influenced? I think not. Leslie Fraser-Mitchell, Fraser's Rest, Briar Close, Necton, Norfolk PE27 8EB.

THE Duke might have added cars, planes and a falling roof slide. But he misses the point because he doesn't address the purpose of an object. The main purpose of a gun is to kill and it seems that anyone seeking to kill turns first to the gun and not the paraphernalia that attend it. David Dawson, 10 Glen Road, Edwicks, Bingley, W Yorkshire BD16 3ET.

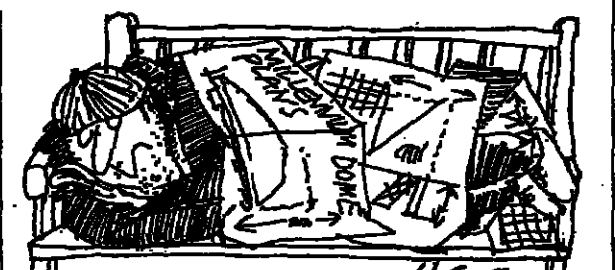
THREE cheers for Prince Philip. His frequent utterances can only hasten the much-hoped-for demise of this ridiculous monarchy and all the paraphernalia that attend it. Kenyon, 69 Belper Road, Derby.

WONDER if the Duke of Edinburgh would care to enlighten us as to whether he would like to lead the world's first 5mm automatic or .22 single-shot cricket bats? Glenn Hackney, 10 Hermes Drive, Burnham on Crouch, Essex CM0 6SW.

In brief...

AS the family of the late Mel Calman were appalled by your piece (Scared to death, December 14). It heightened the pain we still feel at losing our father, and was full of inaccuracies: he died in 1994 not 1992, it was at the Odeon not the Empire and the film he was watching, Carillo's Way, was not as described.

The fact that he died suddenly is awful enough. To see this tragedy used as an excuse for a tasteless "discussion" about the dangers of horror films is beyond sense. To say "Goremongers will be pleased to know that at least one person has died while watching a film" is to treat a horrible event very flippantly. That he was a funny man does not make his death a joke. Stephanie & Claire Calman, London N1.



A millennium idea to build on

INSTEAD of marking the millennium with a glut of giant hub caps, ferris wheels and phaluses, why not harness the nation's collective will to house the homeless by the year 2000? Camelot takes the lead by donating a small percentage of its profits to the scheme. Privatised companies com-

pete to show their generosity: fundraising concerts, sponsorship, fun, flags and parties. Imagine the feelings of goodwill from those housed and the sense of a cause well served, by every one of us. Roger McGough, 26 Gilebe Road, London SW13 0EA.

Conflicting views on dissent

I READ with astonishment the attack on Hugh Kerr MEP by the leader of the Labour MEPs, Wayne David (You're out, comrade, December 18). Kerr is being charged with "bringing the party into disrepute" for what appears to me more than normal vigorous political comment. The terms in which David has chosen to attack Hugh Kerr go beyond any reasonable criticism of his behaviour.

When we read that "people who do step out of line will be dealt with", that "He is being made an example of", and that "We want a close and positive relationship with the Labour Party... we are not going to have that relationship placed in jeopardy with the likes of Hugh Kerr", then what appears to be happening to the Labour Party is a descent into political huggery. There is growing disquiet inside and outside the Labour Party, at its rapid moves toward an authoritarian culture in which any vigorous comment is treated as dissent to be stamped out. Many members hope that after the

election things will improve. This will, however, only happen if a sustained campaign to defend basic rights of free speech is mounted. This cannot wait till after the election. It is ironic that Hugh Kerr is being threatened under a code designed to prevent opinions bringing the Labour Party into disrepute. Nothing will bring Labour into disrepute more quickly than attacking freedom of speech. Trevor Fisher, Hon Sec, Labour Reform, 49 Lovatt Street, Stafford ST16 3DB.

I AM so relieved that Hugh Kerr is not an unrecruited old Trot, because he is articulate and witty, a fan of opera and classical music, a director of Harlow Playhouse, a motorcycle fan and a collector of Scottish paintings. This, of course, entirely justifies his virtually continuous efforts to ensure that the Labour Party is never elected. Michael Dempsey, 59 Cephas Avenue, London E14 4AR.

Little merit in UN appointment

WAS Kofi Annan really the best candidate for the next United Nations secretary-general post (Annan to be UN secretary-general, December 14)? The UN is one organisation where political correctness has replaced open competition and merit as a basis for staff appointments. Five years ago, Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali was elected UN secretary-general because it was an African's turn to lead the world body. And since most past secretary-generals have had at least two successive terms it was either Dr Boutros-Ghali or another African. It is

hardly surprising that the organisation is so weak and feeble. The need for a strong and decisive UN is greatest in Africa where the majority now live in abject poverty and in constant fear of war. The rather pathetic UN response to mass killings in Rwanda in 1994 was just one case of Dr Boutros-Ghali's mediocre leadership. The knowledge that the secretary-general was an African was no comfort to the relatives of the millions killed. Wilbert Mankor, 7 Upper Tollymore Park, London N4 3EJ.

A Country Diary

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: Over-night on Friday the temperature fell to -7C. At 8am on Saturday morning it was only marginally warmer but 28 members of the Stinchcombe Hill Beavers, always an agreeable company, assembled on the first tee to play the postponed Christmas competition. The previous weekend we had been foiled by day-long fog on the hill. This day gave visibility, a uniform white rime of frost that lasted till late morning, and some degrees of sub-zero cold minimal to quality golf. The Beavers assemble every Saturday morning if nothing more serious has the tee reserved and the Christmas competition (played off three quarters of club handicap) followed by lunch is a seasonal highlight. I was twain in the third four to trudge off over the frosted fairway to the first of 18 winter greens. With my golf trolley in tow I was reminded of Sir Ranulph Fiennes's recent Antarctic adventures, albeit without the pain. So it was not easy, and I never felt warm. Never.

Shelley Keith and I managed, by the slim margin of one Stahleford point, to beat our opponents in the fourth and Keith, finishing with 31 points, came second overall in the 28 starters. My 23 points proved only to be a supporting role. Sunday morning was about 12 degrees centigrade warmer and a walk from St Briavels, a hilltop village across the Severn, seemed an attractive option. We planned the long circuit down to the banks of the Wye where the path is a section of the Offa Dyke walk and then the climb back up the hill to St Briavels for lunch in the pub. The corps of vandals had been at work on the footpath signs through the wood and we became slightly lost in the descent. This had the dividend that quite suddenly two deer broke cover immediately in front of us and galloped away through the woodland with a fleetness of foot which had them flying over fallen leaves with only light crunching contact. COLIN LUCKHURST

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Diary  
Matthew Norman

CONTRIVERSY over industrial relations confronts New Labour again. With rapid rebuttal supreme Oofy Wegg-Frosser extending his wildest strike indefinitely (it's like Grunwick at Millbank these days), actor Tony Booth, father-in-law of Mr Tony Blair, is incandescent with rage at plans to "modernise" his union. Equity general secretary Ian McGarry has come over all New Labour, and — with help from consultants Boyden Southwood — has formed a reorganisation plan. Inevitably called Action 2000, this is a "confidential" that Equity Council members like Mr Booth are allowed to know only its main conclusions, which include office closures, sackings and — the appointment of a general manager on £45,000 a year. Mr Booth is livid, and especially about one BR-style proposal. "It's outrageous, but they want to call trade union members 'customers'. What it's all about," says Mr Booth, "is taking control away from members and giving it to a general secretary." Is it just me, or does anyone else find this principle of centralised power eerily familiar?

THE timing of yesterday's report about Wandsworth Council's alleged illegal selling of flats is intriguing. Auditor Binder Hamlyn published it a day after Parliament rose for Christmas, and also a day too late for three Wandsworth papers, none of which appears now for a fortnight. There is no suggestion that the auditor may have discussed the timing in advance with the government. It is a happy coincidence, nothing more.

SAY what you will about my friend Andrew Neil (and even his friends admit he'll never amount to much until he throws the shackles of his own self-effacement), he is too big a man to bear a grudge. In reviewing his book Full Disclosure in the London Review of Books, as you will recall, Paul Foot told how once Andrew's lawyer once refused his request for two extra driving permits for his brace of chauffeurs. He no more overreacted than "Joan," he wrote to his secretary, "let's set the insight he throws at the shackles he has now. Andrew's secretary has apparently called the LRB to cancel his subscription — a gesture that lost its sting when it emerged he had never had one, but had always sent the magazine free.

PRECEDENT has arrived, alas too late, for the Duke of Edinburgh. The splendid Liberal front bencher Conrad Russell recalls that in 1956, after a mod and rockers riot in Brighton, one man was convicted for "carrying an offensive weapon, viz a cricket bat". In the obituary column of the Times is a wounding attack on Michael Howard. The anonymous obituarist of Treasury Solicitor Michael Saunders, who died on Tuesday, suggests that his subject "did not find the present Home Secretary the most congenial of ministers to advise on law", and blames Michael's political fiascos on the "minister (himself a QC) not listening sufficiently to his legal adviser". So savage an assault on a serving minister in a Times obituary is both revealing and unique. Oh dear. Has no one but his mother Hilda and myself a good word to say for the poor lamb?

FEARERS for Terry Major-Ball, who went AWOL after starring in a Sun feature headlined Crummet Major! — it pictured him dancing with a knickerless young woman — have thankfully abated. Soon after he read the Diary yesterday, he spoke. "I was upset, yes," said Terry, "and although I can laugh about it now, I can't see why they were so cruel to such a nice young lady." Terry is particularly distressed about one invented quote — "I'm going to ring John and tell him you've got the best tits in the Conservative party" — which the Sun claims he made to them candidly, but will not be ending. "I can't afford it," he explains, "but maybe I'll put it in my Mall column."

I'M GOING QUINIA-HOPPING IN SPAIN FOR CHRISTMAS.

# The high road or the low road to Europe

Commentary  
Peter Preston

NEW LABOUR, No Britain. If you saw those four words, a mile high, on posters in Birmingham or Bristol, what would you suppose they meant? If anything, would you even know who was advertising what? A focus group in heavy session might conclude that the advertiser was probably Conservative Central Office or Sir James, making another melodramatic claim about Europe: but it's still more of a crossword clue than a slogan.

Facing the same poster, marginally adjusted, a few hundred miles north, to Aberdeen or Arbroath, New Labour, Nae Britain. A real message from the Conservatives? Facing this on sites all over Scotland, what apart from affecting a mock petiois largely unused by Scottish

Tories) does that mean? Something completely different. They're talking devotion and vamping up the prospective death of the union.

It takes four little words, in short, to make an essential point. We're facing two general elections, not one. GE-South will hang on and on about Brussels. GE-North will never stop talking about an Edinburgh assembly with tax-raising powers. The Southern electorate won't be offered a voice on devolution: the union, seemingly, includes them out. The voters of the North, equally, will barely get (or require) a squeak in edgewise on Europe. They already represent a broadly pro-Europe consensus, for only the shrinking, sliding Tories sing a separate tune.

And yet the dislocations trail added complexities. I was standing in Glasgow this week, just off Sauchiehall Street, when I saw the Nae Britain pitch. It isn't the only placard which advertises difference. Glasgow — new art bridges, new roads, new art centres and all — seems peppered with the yellow and blue insignia of European Union. Money from Brussels, the signs seem to say, helps get things done. While nobody

mentions money from London, your friendly Euro-uncle (who seldom claims or receives Southern credit) is loud in this land.

Scottish perceptions of the European issue, therefore, aren't English ones. Nor are Scottish realities. The essential Nationalist gambit on which so much success has been built depends on continued, evolving European membership: independent nations living side by side like Germany and Austria under the EU umbrella. It catches the tide of the last 20 years. It is in no way as intimidating as going it alone. Brussels may cause odd spots of fishy bother: but it is an enabling friend to the cause.

Exactly the same logic applies to Labour's Edinburgh half-way house. Scotland at many levels already has good relationships with Europe because of its identifiable regional character. A devolved assembly immediately strengthens those ties. It begins to produce a Britain which reflects the regional patterns of Germany, Spain and Italy — patterns which Brussels, in practicality, nurtures every day. Wales' comments that trend. The North-East will not be far behind.

Scotland's new chief minister won't want to keep trooping down to Whitehall cap in hand to take orders, a kind of CR McTung. He or she will want clout and status of just the sort that his friends in Belgium offer as a matter of course. He will, in sum, need Brussels as a counterweight to London. The board games may be triangular.

Two things follow, one for Mr Blair and one for Mr Major. The Blair lesson is that he is more locked in to Europe than he supposes. For you can't have devolution — and the spread of regionalism — without it. If the referendum he has promised more firmly than he's promised anything yields an assembly (and 73 per cent of Scots on this week's System 3 poll

want that) he will be bolted to the European Union in his heartland. The ability to strike postures, to blow hot and cold, will have its English limits. If that is true, it makes it prudent imperative to be clear before the election. Why hang yourself on a noose of evasions that will tighten as soon as the polls close? But it is as nothing to John Major's problem.

A referendum Yes to devolution (Martin Kettle observed on this page a few days

ago) inevitably implies a total Tory change of policy. They'll have to rebuild: they'll have to have to adopt devotion to their own. And Europe? It is the price of English nationalism.

Of course there are Eurosceptic Scottish Tories — but precious few of them, because there are precious few Scottish Tories left. Mrs Thatcher, an English nationalist incarnate, has done them in. Teddy Taylor, her shadow Scottish Secretary, had to voyage to Scotland to find a seat now Rinkind for Chelsea? And the lady, in her ruminations, also assured that Scottish nationalists have an absolutely different agenda.

What could the Conservatives, amid the wreckage of electoral defeat, do next? They could split. Disaster. They could — under a Fortillo or a Redwood — turn outright sceptics. But that, as Ken Clarke might observe, would be the worst disaster of all: narrow rebirth as the effective English National Party.

The wilder spirits are chuntering already after a withdrawal referendum. But could England vote to take Scotland and Wales out against their will? If you want No Britain, that's the true doomsday option.

My Glasgow friends (many times bitten, exceedingly shy) won't believe in devolution also bear a rich variety of warmer, gentler, more thoughtful and reflective noises: "Purrrrrr!" and "Furrrrrr!" among them. Put it this way, I wear a lot of different hats. As a child's father, political adviser and senior Guardian columnist, I wear what I call my "Zap" hat. I fix with the interplay of ideas. But as a professional counsellor and relationship expert, with many television and radio appearances to my credit, I wear a different hat — a hat called "Purrrrrr!", a hat called contemplation.

And I'd like to do this gentler, more analytic hat for today's column. The Secret Meaning Of Christmas Presents dissects the motives behind different gifts your partner may be planning to give you — and offers a vital warning to women of all ages. Fuller details can be found in my recent publication, Coping With Christmas, the latest in my "Coping With..." series. Other titles available in the series include Coping With New Clothes, Coping With Old Friends and Coping With Your Boss. Oh, and the Household Item Beware: he has stopped seeing you as a person and has started to see you only in terms of a housekeeper. If he gives you a steam-iron, a Hoover or something for the kitchen, you should run a mile. This guy is much more interested in his own judgment of what you need than in listening to your inner desires. Make a New Year's resolution: take control of your own life.

Registration of MPs would be a start. But the public has known the power of Freemasonry. I am regularly sent letters from people who believe that time and again their attempts to pursue justice through the courts has been skewed by a nexus of Masonic solicitors, barristers and judges. Quite often this is the perception of women in the divorce courts, which they believe may be fixed against them if their husbands are Masons. There is colossal room for public suspicion when the powers of influence in the civil courts.

My research in the 1980s discovered 18 circuit judges who were Freemasons, three Queen's Bench judges, three Circuit judges. Quite often this is the perception of women in the divorce courts, which they believe may be fixed against them if their husbands are Masons. There is colossal room for public suspicion when the powers of influence in the civil courts.

COURT cases have been proved that Masons have been involved in criminal activity. Up until the point when a Mason has been convicted of a crime, fellow Masons pledge to "support [his] character in [his] absence as in [his] presence". They will do all they can, whether a policeman, a prosecuting solicitor, or a judge, to ensure that their buddy's character is not impugned.

So much of this appears to be anecdotal, but more and more concrete evidence has emerged. Take the Masonic corruption that engulfed Southend in the 1980s. Lo and behold, more than 10 years after Paul Foot and I separately revealed the corrupting role of local Masons, the Commission of Local and Administration has just come out with a report revealing that, by not declaring they were Freemasons, many Castle Point councillors had been guilty of maladministration.

Freemasons, in their defence, protest that they are a moral society, an elevating force that improves men's conduct; and that nothing in their rituals or oaths is to be taken as any encouragement to break the laws of the land. But can all the rituals be merely symbolic? One must presume that people join lodges predominantly to further their own ends, and to form a loose combination (in the sense of the historic Combination Acts) against the interests of everybody who is not a Mason.

Masons also say that they should not be singled out from the Oxbridge mafia, the public-school ties, the Garlick, the Knights of St Columba — but such arguments do not obviate the Masons' own crimes. The hypocrisy is that golf clubs, etc. do not claim to be moral societies; yet Freemasonry is wrapped in all the verbiage of high moral conduct which is often shown to be hollow.

Martin Short is an author, journalist and TV producer. His books include Inside The Brotherhood (Granta), Crime Inc (Mandarin), and, in 1997, Informer (Smith Gryphon)

# Beware men bearing Christmas gifts



Bel Littlejohn

WE ALL have our faults. Mine? I'm not afraid to admit it: I have far too much creative energy. That, coupled with a craving for intellectual and artistic fulfilment — and a real flair for putting my millions of innovative ideas into action.

If you could listen to the inside of my head, it would sound something like this: "Zap!" "Whizz!" "Eureka!" Of course, I'm simplifying. But listen harder and you would also hear a rich variety of warmer, gentler, more thoughtful and reflective noises: "Purrrrrr!" and "Furrrrrr!" among them.

Put it this way, I wear a lot of different hats. As a child's father, political adviser and senior Guardian columnist, I wear what I call my "Zap" hat. I fix with the interplay of ideas. But as a professional counsellor and relationship expert, with many television and radio appearances to my credit, I wear a different hat — a hat called "Purrrrrr!", a hat called contemplation.

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# Do Freemasons in parliament, police and judiciary pervert fairness and justice? Yes, argues Martin Short, and the only remedy is complete, open disclosure

## Unsafe secret society

IT HAS taken 200 years for the House of Commons to have a bill committed to examine Freemasonry. That if nothing else confirms just how powerful is this institution: a body whose membership at the heart of power has remained unquestioned ever since 1789, when grotesque political lobbying by England's two main lodges kept Masons off the list of secret societies banned under the Unlawful Societies Act.

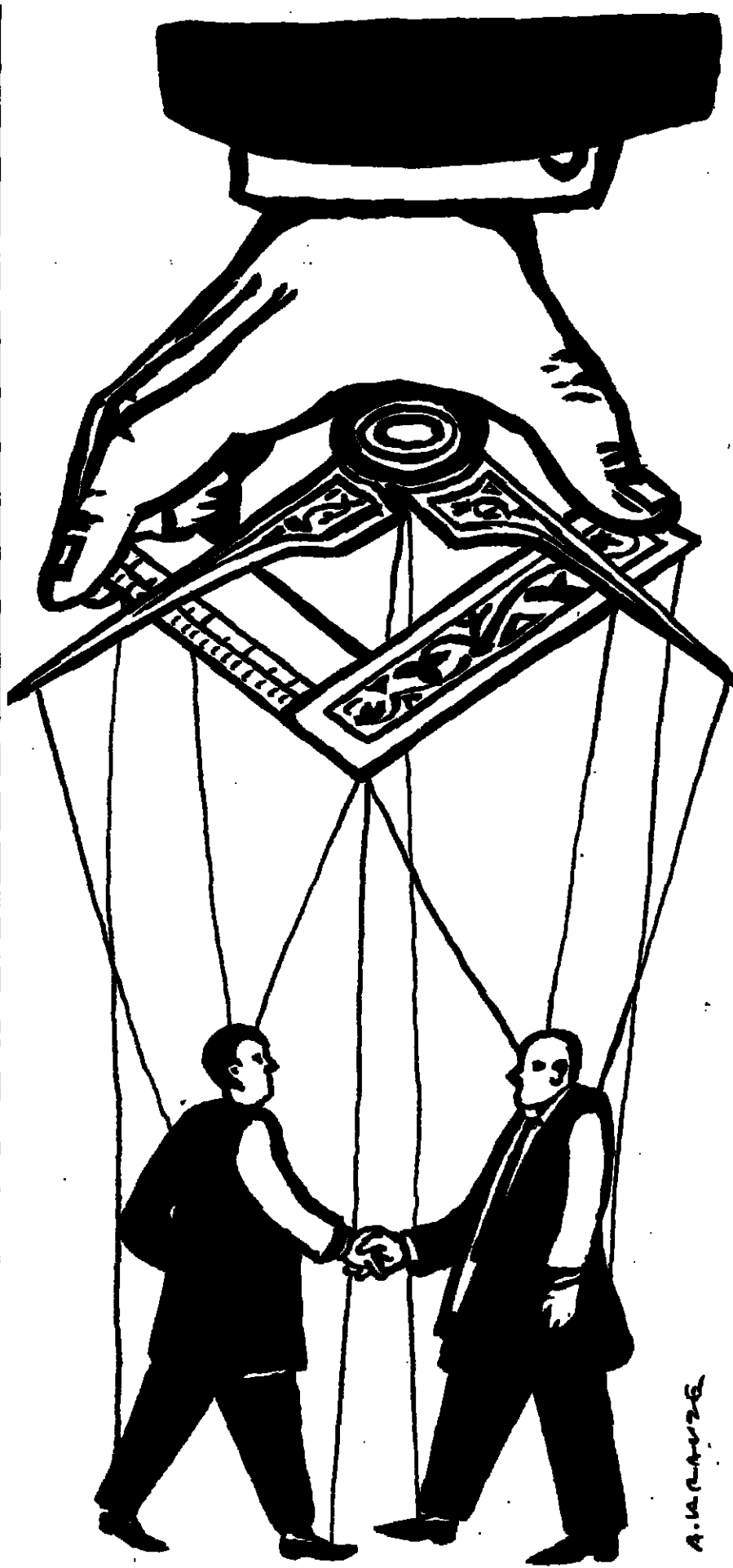
And Freemasonry does have a hold among MPs. When I was researching my book Inside The Brotherhood, in the late 1980s, I sent a questionnaire to every male MP (women, of course, cannot join). More than 207 responded: 9 said they were Masons, 228 that they were not. Some 48 (that is, 21 per cent) of the non-Masons said they had been approached to join Freemasonry but had refused; and of these 17 were Conservatives and 15 were Labour. Proof, in other words, that the movement is perpetually trying to noble people who are (or are likely to become) MPs. This extended across the political spectrum: I came across the existence of the New Welcome Lodge, set up in 1929 by the then Prince of Wales to embrace the Labour Party, through fear that otherwise a Labour government might reject and outlaw Freemasonry. I am told that over the years a number of quite prominent Labour MPs have belonged — although the only one I have met who would admit this is Neil Thorne, the former MP for Ilford South.

Thorne, a "verray parfit gentil knight", is the last man to inspire fears of a Masonic political conspiracy. But it strikes me that to have a Masonic lodge which bonds Labour, Conservative and, for all I know, Liberal MPs together is a confidence trick on the public. It is anti-democratic: while we are led to believe that the snarling dogs in Parliament are in some kind of opposition to each other, a number of them may well be joined together in the same Masonic lodge, if not within the overall fraternity.

The problem is that Masons are bonded together by oaths which require them to support each other, to look after each others' interests, and to keep each others' lawful secrets. The oaths of Masonry would not matter greatly if their transgression were not dressed up with ferocious penalties: "having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by the root and buried in the sand of the sea at low water mark" — and that is merely the first degree. In the second degree, it incurs "having my left breast laid open, my heart torn therefrom and given to the ravens and birds of the air..." The third degree extends to "being severed in two, my bowels burned to ashes, and those ashes scattered over the face of the earth and wafted by the four winds of heaven..." Such punishments may be symbolic; but they are also accompanied by "the more effective punishment of being branded as a wilfully perjured individual, void of all moral worth".

These bonds must blunt conventional political allegiance and make one question what motivates some MPs' actions. Yet, at a time of growing concern to restore public confidence in Parliament, MPs are under no obligation to declare lodge membership. Surely they must be made to register it, in a way that is accessible to the public.

I have learned a few things since conducting my original 1988 survey of MPs. First Par-



kinson was one who did not reply; yet I discovered that he was a member of the Potters Bar lodge, which happened to be in his constituency. He did not live in Potters Bar, so why had he joined? Was his motive something to do with his desire to become, and stay, an MP? I also had a response from Willie Whitelaw, then Home Secretary, who told me: "I have never been an active Mason since I

entered the House of Commons in 1955." Lo and behold, I found out from the 1988 Masonic Yearbook for Scotland that he did indeed hold a Masonic rank, representing the Grand Lodge in Scotland overseas, even as he was writing to me. I can hardly believe that he did not know this. If he had been lying to me — this, the human face of Conservatism — one wonders what one can ever believe.

# Shopping by post? Play it safe

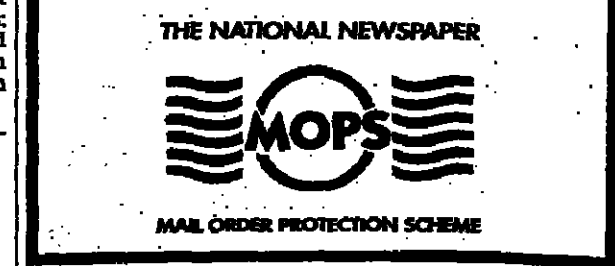
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John in 1996



Marcello Mastroianni

# A sweet life of very hard work

**M**ARCELLO Mastroianni, who has died of cancer at the age of 73, belonged to a gifted and colourful generation of Italian actors originally discovered and promoted by the director Luchino Visconti.

Mastroianni joined Visconti's theatre company in Rome in 1948 without any formal drama school training. With his striking Mediterranean good looks, he was thought to be the embodiment of the Latin Lover — though he heavily resisted that in the roles he accepted after Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* brought him to international stardom in 1960. Indeed, he often masochistically demolished any such image. He told a scandalised American television chat-show audience in 1977: "To be a Latin Lover a man, above all, has to be a great fucker — he has to be infallible and I'm not that. I often foul it up."

He was born in the Ciocchia region, south of Rome, the elder son of a cabinet maker whose working-class relatives included a prodigious number of painters and sculptors. The family soon moved north to Turin, where his brother Ruggero — a film editor — was born. But when the family moved south again, this time to the proletarian Tuscolano quarter of Rome, where his father set up a workshop.

Marcello was sent out to work in the holidays and since his home was near Cinecittà, where neighbours and relatives laboured in the studio support departments, what could have been more natural than that, from the age of 12, he should become a film extra and bump into the stars? He was, of course, inspired to follow them. He later claimed that his original ambition had been to be an architect, though the closest he ever came to that was his diploma, in 1948, in construction, which landed him a job as technical drawing assistant with Rome city council.

The liberation of Rome by the allies towards the end of the second world war ended this, and he worked as a clerk for Eagle Lion Films. Wisely, he enrolled with Rome University's commerce and economics faculty to be eligible to join CUT — Centre for



He said that if an actor does not take risks, he is only a commercial product, like a bottle of Coke

Drawing of Mastroianni by Federico Fellini

University Theatre. There he acted with Giulietta Masina, Fellini's future wife (and key movie star), who enthusiastically introduced him to Fellini; his friendship and canny professional association advanced Mastroianni's career spectacularly.

At CUT, Mastroianni was spotted by one of Visconti's entourage and after an interview with the great man was taken on to his payroll at three times his monthly salary as a clerk. This was important, since his father's long diabetic illness (he died in 1950) meant that Marcello had become the family breadwinner. Money continued to be so tight that when he won the first of his many acting awards — a Nastro d'argento and a Grolla d'oro — for the 1954 film *Two Bad She's Bad* (which began his enduring screen partnership with Sophia Loren) his mother promptly pawned them.

He soon had family of his own. He married Flora Carabella, an actress in Visconti's company in 1950, and their daughter, Barbara, arrived a year later. Flora was not to appear in one of her glamorous husband's films until 1976, when she played his aunt in the costume piece, *Calastrisce Nobile Veneziano*. Marcello had a daughter, Chiara, by Catherine Deneuve, his co-star of the early 1970s films *It Only Happens to Others* and *The Slightly Pregnant Man*.

In the early 1950s, Mastroianni's growing reputation as a stage actor in Rome helped him to land a number of solid supporting roles on film, usually as good-natured working-class lads. Then with

Visconti in 1957 (both as star and co-producer) he made *White Nights*, based on a Dostoevsky short story, which opened up more complex middle-class casting. Initially, Vittorio de Sica doubted whether Mastroianni could succeed as an actor because of his rather nasal vocal delivery. But eventually he revised that opinion. De Sica became something of an uncle figure, as well as being the third character in the Mastroianni-Sophia Loren comedies. During the 1960s and 1970s de Sica directed him in *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, *Marriage Italian Style*, *The Stranger* and *A Place for Lovers*.

Unlike de Sica, Mastroianni was never overtly political. Childhood photos show him in a boy's fascist uniform, yet he described himself as an old-fashioned romantic socialist. He was as wary of the actor as political activist as he was sceptical of the Method actor.

Fellini particularly appreciated, in their films (*La Dolce Vita*, *8½*, *City of Women*, *Ginger and Fred*, and *Intervista*), the way that Mastroianni never asked questions and was always ready on set to develop his character by osmosis and instinct. Mastroianni always claimed to be lazy. He more than once said screen acting was "hollyday time" whereas the discipline of stage acting made it "school time". He was a self-indulgent eater and even more self-indulgent smoker, perpetually having to lose weight and cut down on the

weed for the next big role. But the adventurousness of his roles in over 130 films through four decades demonstrated time and again that he took screen acting far more seriously than he ever cared to show.

Inevitably, the chemistry was less right sometimes: he was not happy working with Antonioni on *La Notte* (The Night) in 1960. Despite occasional disappointments of this kind, he simply showed his commitment to his art by maintaining that if an actor does not take risks he becomes a commercial product. "Like a bottle of Coke". And he not only accepted every conceivable role — taxi drivers to doctors, crooks to priests — but by forming his own production company to do work that was particularly dear to his heart, like directing the Neapolitan actor-wright Eduardo De Filippo in an adaptation of one of De Filippo's stage plays, *The Voices Within*.

One of the biggest risks he took was in declining the siren call of Hollywood after the success of *La Dolce Vita* — on the grounds that he could not speak English. This did not stop him coming later to the UK and doing *Diamonds For Breakfast* for Christopher Morahan and *Leo The Last* for John Boorman; he learned his roles next-to-fashion.

And, equally bravely, he returned to the stage both in Italy and France. After a 10-year absence from the theatre he decided, in 1966, aged 42, to play Rudolph Valentino, in *Ciao Rudy*, a musical biography of the Italian-born heart-throb. Although Mastroianni conscientiously slimmed and gave up smoking, as well as taking a punishing series of singing and dancing lessons, he bought his way out of this commitment after a commercially successful run in Rome. After this false start he waited another 18 years before returning again — in Paris in 1984, to play the role of Gene Saks in the long solo passages recalling the character's life and marriage, which Mastroianni was called upon to sustain, showed that the long years in the film studios had robbed the Italian stage of a very fine stage performer.

It will be as a screen actor that Mastroianni will always be remembered. No doubt the



A big adventure... Mastroianni kept trying the new across 40 years and over 130 films PHOTOGRAPH MICHEL ANGELO DUBAZZO

writer, Paris Burdon, *Le Ultime Lune*, premiered to considerable critical acclaim in Venice's Teatro Goldoni. In it, Mastroianni touchingly played an elderly widower; the long solo passages recalling the character's life and marriage, which Mastroianni was called upon to sustain, showed that the long years in the film studios had robbed the Italian stage of a very fine stage performer.

He even acted in French on the Paris stage. Peter Brook was looking for an actor to play opposite his wife Natasha

in his 1976 film *Toto Mode* precisely because it was completely different from anything he had played before — just as he had appreciated that the Taviani brothers 1974 film *Allons voir* had allowed him to play bad guys and Ettore Scola's 1969 *What Time Is It? It's 12* opened the way to father roles.

Visconti and internationally lesser-known directors like Blasetti, Emmer, Priri, Ferreri and Scola, and to have worked with Antonioni, Polanski and Liliana Cavani means that his achievement was that of a colossus. His death ought to precipitate a mighty season of retrospective showings.

Peter Roberts

Marcello Mastroianni, actor, born September 28, 1924; died December 19, 1986

## The actor who kept going back on stage to have a little more fun



Partners... Marcello Mastroianni and Federico Fellini

FIRST saw Marcello on the stage the very first time I went to the theatre in Italy, in Rome in the early 1950s. The play was Miller's *Death of a Salesman* directed by Luchino Visconti, who had given the young actor his first professional stage experience, playing the role of Stanley's pal in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The next season he took over the role of Stanley from Vittorio Gassman.

In Miller's play Marcello had first played Happy. When I saw the revival a few seasons later he had taken over the part of Biff. In later years I saw him in several other Visconti productions, in two Chekhov plays, as Solon in *The Three Sisters* and as Astrov in *Uncle Vanya* and he was a delightful Ripafratta in Goldoni's *La Locandiera* (Mine Hostess). What impressed me most about Marcello was his way of acting, so refreshingly different from the traditional flamboyant rhetorical Italian acting style.

Mastroianni admitted: "(Visconti) put me on the stage and taught me almost everything I know. He didn't just teach me the profession of acting but also how to enjoy being an actor as a man living in the modern world... But he also taught me not to be a *guito* (Italian for barnstormer), something which even some of my distinguished colleagues often forget."

During the 1950s he was to win popularity with Italian films appearing in films that were usually light-hearted comedies in which he played the handsome plebeian hero. Then Visconti again gave him a chance to do something "serious", this time in film. This was an adaptation of Dostoevsky's *Le Notti Bianche* (White Nights) set in an Italian city (Livorno) rebuilt at Cinecittà Studios. It was made by a co-operative of the most promising young talents he was partner with producer Franco Cristaldi, director Visconti and scriptwriter Suso

Cecchi D'Amico. Premiered at the 1956 Venice Festival, it won only a Silver Lion, the Gold going to Satyajit Ray's *Apurajit*.

When it was shown at the first London Film Festival two months later, I was invited to accompany the quartet. This gave me the chance to see how much Marcello enjoyed being an actor. He was excited as a schoolboy when we took them to see Laurence Olivier in *The Ezzelin*.

MARCELLO was the only one of us in Larry's dressing room after who didn't feel embarrassed by this first meeting between two European theatrical greats (as so often happens on such historic occasions, the two greats, Visconti and Olivier, didn't know what to say to each other). Marcello just sat there gazing at Larry with adoring eyes. A party had been organised in Chelsea and as I bundled Marcello into a taxi he was asking eagerly:

"Who are we going to meet?"

The cinema kept him occupied in the years to come but he'd return to the stage from time to time "to have fun" as he put it, though long runs were never quite met. He played Rudolph Valentino in an Italian musical. It was a rather awful show, but Marcello was disarmingly at ease as he sang his songs *à la Rex Harrison*. He loved playing every evening with 13 radiant leading ladies. He also enjoyed playing poker with the stage hands. There was an offer to take the show to Broadway but Marcello felt he couldn't cope with two matinees as well as six evening performances. With the excuse that Fellini wanted him for a new film (the ill-fated *Voyage of G. Mastorna* that was never made) he withdrew from the show after a 100 performances.

He even acted in French on the Paris stage. Peter Brook was looking for an actor to play opposite his wife Natasha

in his production of Francois Billeloux's play *Chin-Chin*. Brook and Marcello had never met. They holidayed in the same French watering place and at meals their eyes never quite met. One day, Brook left a message with the concierge saying he'd like to meet Marcello. As he handed over the note, he was given another — from Marcello, saying he'd like to work with Brook. Marcello has said that he enjoyed this experience too, though at first he was dismayed to find he was expected to do the morning exercises *à la Rex Harrison* for all actors working with the guru Brook.

Another capricious brought him back to the theatre in the 1960s when after having enjoyed working with Nikita Mikhalkov in the Italian-Soviet *Oci Ciornie* (Dark Eyes) he persuaded the Russian director to come to Rome and direct him at the Teatro Argentina in one of the roles he'd always wanted to play, Che-

khov's Piatanov. Marcello's last stage appearance, and the one that seems to have given him most satisfaction was in the play by the relatively little known dramatist Furio Bordon, *Le ultime lune* (The Last Moons) which won him rave reviews from the critics, and ovations wherever it played all over Italy.

In spite of several interruptions due to his ailing health — which finally induced him to give up alcohol and smoking — he carried it over three seasons. The play was about a retired professor in his late seventies whose son and daughter-in-law don't protest enough when he offers to move into an old age home. "There came a moment," Marcello said when the play was revived again, "when I sat down to put my make-up on, I looked in the mirror and said why am I bothering to make up? I am an old man, anyway."

John Francis Lane

Yuli Borisovich Khariton

## Power behind Soviet bomb

**Y**ULI Khariton, who has died aged 92, was a Russian nuclear physicist and a key member of the Soviet atomic and hydrogen bomb teams. (These were led by Igor Kurchatov.) In the early 1950s, Khariton set up Arzamas-16, a nuclear weapons laboratory on the Volga at Nizhni Novgorod, and has directed it ever since. It was there that he died.

Like many brilliant physicists from the United States, Europe and the Soviet Union during the interwar years, Yuli Khariton migrated as a graduate to the Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge, University to work under the great Ernest Rutherford. There he gained his doctorate in theoretical physics in 1927. At that time, nuclear physics was at the cutting edge of academic research, the neutron had not been discovered and notions of nuclear weapons had yet to emerge. But on his tour of western Europe, Yuli Khariton became acutely aware of the underlying and powerful

throb of fascism and, on returning to Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) organised the establishment of an explosives laboratory as an offshoot of the Institute of Physics and Technology (known as Fizteh). He was the Soviet Union was about to be engulfed by Stalin's Great Terror.

Although in that decade Khariton worked on nuclear chemistry, he was drawn back to nuclear physics when, early in 1939, Igor Kurchatov — then also at Fizteh — organised a study of nuclear fission. The brilliant Yakov Zeldovich, a born physicist and mathematician who gained his doctorate without formal training, was the third member of the study group. Their study was not officially approved. Yuli Khariton later recalled that they "worked only in the evenings sometimes very late, but we soon understood that, in theory and quite probably in reality, a chain reaction was possible. We took it very seriously, for we also understood

that a bomb releasing enormous energy was also possible." From this time onward Khariton and Kurchatov bombarded the Soviet authorities with urgent secret memoranda, warning of the need for a nuclear research programme.

The advice of the central scientific committee was that nuclear weapons were a possibility of the remote future. From the start of Operation Barbarossa, the Nazi invasion of the country in the spring of 1941, to the 1942 Red Army offensive, the Soviet authorities did nothing although — largely through the British-based Soviet spy Klaus Fuchs — they knew of the Maud Report and of increasing activity in America.

On February 11, 1943, Khariton and Kurchatov were given the go-ahead and promised some of the resources they needed. With their former laboratories destroyed, the group worked initially in a Moscow hotel, with Yuli Khariton working on centrifuge design for uranium-235 separation and also with

Kurchatov on the design of reactors for plutonium production. The group had no knowledge then of the Enrico Fermi reactor at Chicago nor, seemingly, did the authorities appreciate the huge scale of the Anglo-American programme.

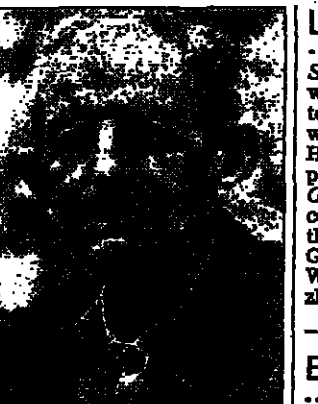
In the wake of the United States atom-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki things changed dramatically. Ordered to find a site for the development of nuclear weapons, the team searched the vast wooded areas east of Moscow. They settled on Sarov, the site of a former monastery which had become a prison camp. It was sealed off by the forces of secret police chief Lavrenty Beria.

The fate of the thousands of prisoners went unrecorded. Although always called Sarov by Yuli Khariton and the other scientists, the site was known at different times as the Volga Office, Installation 658, Kremlev, Arzamas-75 and finally Arzamas-16. At this site over the next decades Khariton — who at the outset was appointed as

director — emerged as the brilliant interpreter and executor of Kurchatov's and, later, Sakharov's intuitive ideas. Although the Soviet team often had to move forward on levels of scientific information that would have seemed inadequate to the Americans, there were few mistakes.

The conditions under which they worked were also very different. During the difficult and politically pressured development of both A-weapons and H-weapons, the Khariton-Kurchatov teams were continually terrorised by Beria and his men. Khariton's father was killed or died of hardship in one of Stalin's labour camps. For extremely trivial reasons, key scientists were being taken by Beria for interrogation and threatened with imprisonment or exile in the camps. The site was so secret that even the party secretaries knew nothing of it.

Yuli Khariton, whose huge creative potential was stunted by these appalling conditions, remained at Sarov after the collapse of the Soviet Union.



Khariton... ran a crucial Soviet nuclear laboratory from its beginning

and was still working as director when he died.

Like many physicists, Yuli Khariton had deep cultural interests, particularly in music and in literature. The son of a journalist and a Moscow actress, Yuli had a wide range of gifts. In 1933 he published a partial memoir, *The Khariton Version* in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. More may now come to light.

Anthony Tucker

Yuli Borisovich Khariton, scientist, born 1904; died December 18, 1986

Letter: Willie Rushton

Simon Rae writes: Anyone who worked with Willie Rushton (obituary December 12) will testify to his star quality. He was also a highly accomplished novelist and WG Grace's Last Case (1984), was a comic tour-de-force, in which the bizarre pairing of WG Grace and Conan Doyle's Dr Watson solve a case of dazzling complexity, involving a

plot to conquer the world by the Martians left over at the end of HG Wells' *The War of the Worlds*. The characters include A.L. Stevenson's Mr Hyde, a parody of Apache medicine man, Toulouse Lautrec and Queen Victoria. It is an ebullient masterpiece, and a new edition would be a fitting memorial to this bewilderingly gifted man.

Birthdays

Bill Abbott, head of security, the Prison Service, 55; Michael Beaumont, Seigneur of Sart, 68; Billy Bragg, rock singer, 38; Simon Channing, former chairman, London Philharmonic, 36; Peter Criss, rock drummer, 54; Charles Denton, television and film producer, 65; Bo Diddley, singer and guitarist, 68; Uri Geller, illusionist, 48; Rose Hepplewhite, former chief executive, Child Support Agency, 44; Lord (Geoffrey) Howe of Aberavon, former Conservative minister, 70; Paddy McNally, motor racing consultant, 55; Richard Trickett, former principal, St Hugh's College, Oxford, 73; Mitsuho Uchida, pianist, 48; John Whitney, chairman, the Really Useful Group, 66.

Death Notices

LE WARRIE, Joy, the Southwood of Althwaite died on 17th December at Westmorland General Hospital, Kettlewell, Yorkshire. She was born in Lancashire and married to James Le Warrie on 23rd December, 1910. She was survived by her husband, James, and her son, James, who was also her executor. Burial at Kettlewell, North Yorkshire, on 20th December.

In Memoriam

FRANK, Gregory, 27/10/07 to 20/12/86 remembered with love and longing.

Births

STEPH, A son, Rudi Gerrard, to Gayle and Peter Sharp on December 17th, 1986.

صوتنا من الامم



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# Finance Guardian

## Man of leisure takes over

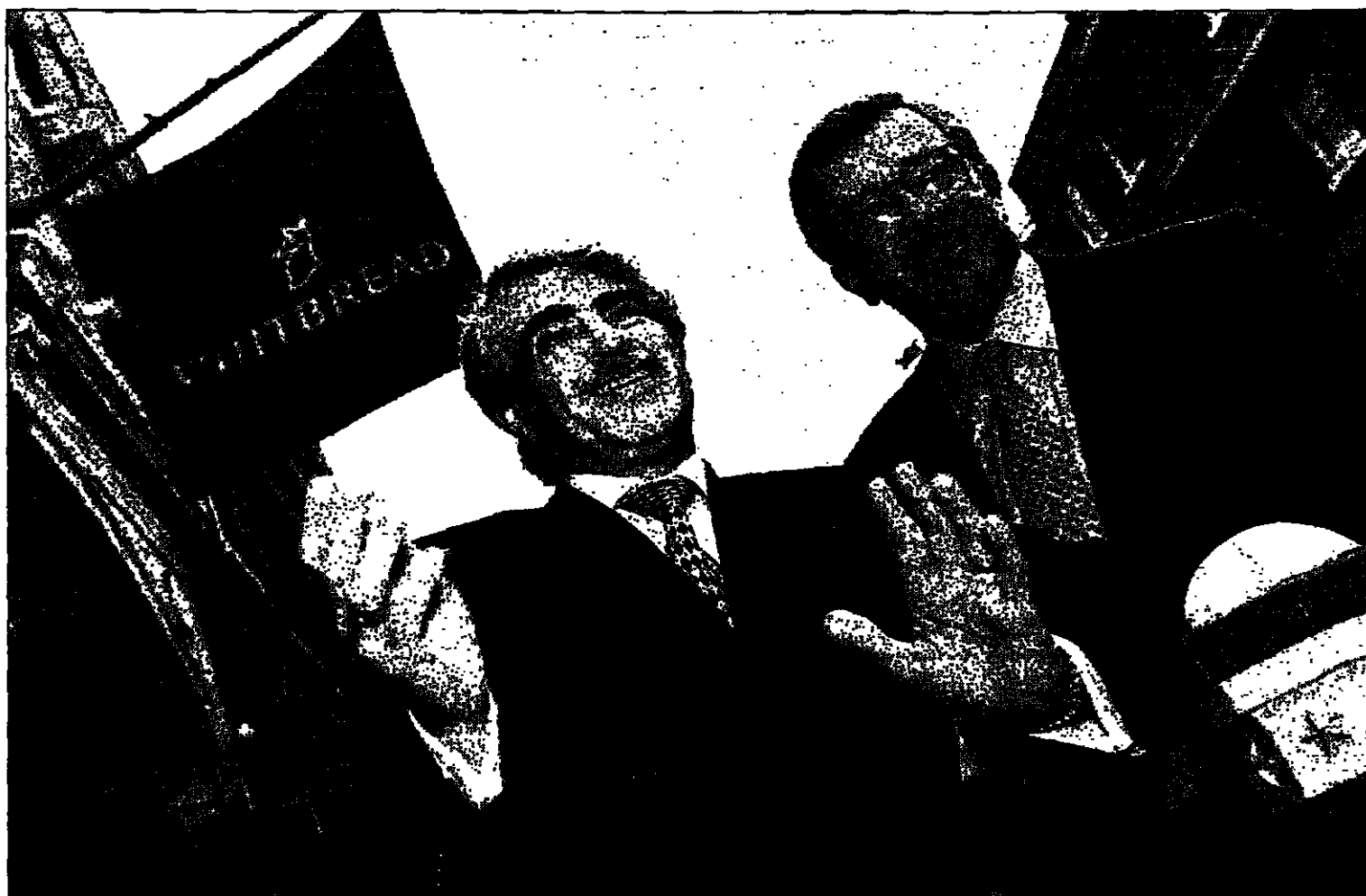
**P**ETER Jarvis (right), chief executive of Whitbread, surprised the City yesterday as he announced that he is to step down next summer. He is handing over the reins to David Thomas (left), head of the restaurants and leisure division, writes Dominic Walsh.

However, analysts expect little change of strategy from the man credited with helping to transform the brewer into a broadly based leisure company. It was Mr Thomas who masterminded the David Lloyd Leisure and Pelican restaurant group acquisitions.

"They are basically cut from the same mould," said EFW analyst Charles Winston.

Mr Jarvis, aged 55, said he intended to retain an involvement with business through his non-executive directorships of Burton, Rank and Baxendale.

PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS



## Notebook

### Metal verdict like a lead balloon



Edited by Alex Brummer

**I**T IS partly in the nature of British financial regulation that it requires a grave crisis in the marketplace, like the Sumitomo affair, before the regulators take any action.

The evidence of poor surveillance and controls at the London Metal Exchange was abundant long before rogue trader Yasuo Hamanaka put up his hand, but nothing was done about it.

As at Barings, as long as the institutions concerned were bringing in the income, compliance officers and self-regulatory organisations are reluctant to intervene.

Now, after six months' study, unrelated to the parallel enforcement investigation, the Securities and Investment Board has come up with the blindingly obvious. Those responsible for governance of the market cannot, at the same time, represent some of the most critical commercial interests on the trading floor.

There must be an length governance of the kind which has been long established at the Stock Exchange and is being put into place at other problem markets like Lloyd's of London.

Nevertheless, the SIB document marks a giant step forward for a market where the rules have failed to keep up with the volume of trading and changing practices. Of particular significance are the recommendations for increasing transparency in agency (third party) and options trading, two of the fastest growing and least understood areas.

What is worrying is that it has taken the SIB review by David Fritchard to produce a requirement that there be more information sharing with the Securities and Futures Authority, which is directly responsible for monitoring members' firms. It is shocking if such basic data have not been systematically provided to the authorities.

It is imperative that the SIB changes are implemented quickly: the 12 months' leeway being given seems over-generous. Moreover, if the reforms are to be credible it would be wise if the existing team of chief executive David King and Raj Bagri, both of whom have a commercial involvement in the market, were to stand aside so independent leadership can be chosen.

they do provide clues as to how the Halifax will stand up as a plc when, as is inevitable, members vote for their average payout of £700-£1,000.

The most striking figure, on which bank analysts will alight, is the cost/income ratio of 42 per cent, which means that in cost terms it is in a different league to the clearing banks, which are still struggling with the legacy of too many branches and poor information technology.

The Halifax has given a high priority to restructuring its IT, following the Leeds takeover, which is among the reasons for an exceptional charge of £268.9 million.

This may not be the end of this in that the Clerical Medical mutual insurer does not come aboard until the end of the year but before the year-end.

Even after the exceptional charges, including an additional £89 million for the conversion, the Halifax still made £762 million before tax over the nine months, with its assets of £100 billion, the former building society will be a substantial addition to the stock market.

Unlike the Alliance & Leicester and the Woolwich, it has decided to waive the five-year quarantine for bids and is ready to fully accept the discipline of the markets from day one. The A&L and Woolwich are asking for the best of all worlds: stock market quotes, the ability to raise rights issues and therefore the "back door" to the market, and in the A&L's case, generous options for directors.

Treasury minister Angela Knight should ignore their whingeing and remove the five-year rule against takeovers.

# Labour lays down law on commodity market reform

**A** LABOUR government would consider stripping the London Metal Exchange of its cherished right to operate as a self-regulatory body unless the City's biggest and most powerful commodity market urgently embraces reforms demanded by the Securities and Investment Board watchdog.

Shadow economic secretary Mike O'Brien issued that warning yesterday as the SIB unveiled the findings of the six-month investigation into

the running of the City's commodity markets begun in the wake of the £1.8 billion Sumitomo copper fraud in Japan.

Its indictment of the LME — the world's biggest market for the trading of non-ferrous metals — concluded: "Changes are needed to improve standards at the London Metal Exchange."

Among the seven key recommendations is a call for "an urgent and thorough review by the LME of its governance."

In what is seen as a coded attack on directors of the market who have personal interests in the trades they oversee, the report added that action must be taken to avoid

"conflicts of interest", and to ensure that the market is "run in the interests of its users and members".

It also comes close to personal criticism of the effectiveness of chief executive David King and chairman Raj Bagri, calling for "an increase in the role, authority and resources of the LME executive to enable it better to meet the challenges of running and regulating a successful world market".

Mr O'Brien said: "Self-regulation failed in the Sumitomo case. LME must now make urgent changes if it is to ensure its future as an regulatory independent entity."

The SIB report does not

give any insight into its work with the Serious Fraud Office, the City of London police and other enforcement agencies in the US and Japan on possible links between the Sumitomo affair and British-based brokers.

But it calls for:

- better market monitoring with strengthened large-position reporting, more staff and more extensive use of technology;
- a shake-up of the LME's rules and the enforcement "to reflect fully the regulatory obligations owed by its members";
- better systemic information-sharing with the Securities and Futures Authority

and the London Clearing House.

- improvements in market transparency;
- more tightly controlled and transparent warehousing arrangements;

David Fritchard, SIB head of markets and exchanges, called the LME the "leading metals exchange in the world". But there were "a number of areas where the LME needs to strengthen and develop its regulatory structure to reflect changes in the market".

Mr King last night promised urgent action but insisted that "in big-picture terms the LME has been given a clean bill of health".

He pointed out that the review had been sought by the LME even though the events which led to the losses at Sumitomo were in jurisdictions outside its control.

The SIB had publicly declared that there had been "no systemic risk to the markets from the way we operated".

But he warned that there was still a loophole in the regulatory system. "Under current legislation it is possible to trade actively in many millions of tonnes in LME contracts in the UK without the obligation to be an LME member. The review envisages that this will be dealt with by better inter-regulator regulation."

## Christmas gloom

### Gallaher axes 950 jobs in Cheshire run-down

**M**ARTYN HALLAM, Northern Industrial Correspondent

**G**ALLAHER, the international tobacco company, yesterday provoked fury by announcing the run-down of its factory in Hyde, Cheshire, with the loss of 950 jobs. Closure is expected by the year 2000.

The company, which made its announcement without consulting union officials, will receive £2.9 million in government funding towards a £45.6 million expansion of its plant in Northern Ireland, where it will create 290 jobs. The closure is the latest in a decade of rationalisation which has seen Gallaher shed some 1,600 UK jobs, including almost 1,000 in Northern Ireland. The British workforce is now 3,700.

Workers at the Cheshire plant, which manufactures

Benson & Hedges and Silk Cut cigarettes, were last night preparing to defend their jobs. Union leaders open rescue talks with executives on January 7.

Brenda Warrington, the MSF union secretary at the plant, said most of the workforce, with an average age of 45 to 48, had long service. "I think the company has condemned most of us to a life without work," she said.

She said: "We heard the news for the first time today; there were no rumours before it. No indications. People are angry that our employers have treated us so shabbily."

Closure would spread "devastation through the whole community," she said. Mike Mulhearn, MSF national secretary for the tobacco sector, said: "It doesn't make sense to concentrate all your production in one location."

Union sources suspect the

closure decision was taken by the British board of an American company preparing for a de-merger, and a listing of Gallaher on the London stock exchange in 1997.

Gallaher last night said the production transfer to a single factory at Lisnallan, near Ballymena, Co Antrim, would cost around £70 million. The additional £40 million investment would include the latest ultra-high-speed machinery.

Through rationalisation and investment "we will achieve significantly lower overhead costs and make an important improvement in production efficiency," said Peter Wilson, Gallaher's chairman.

• BAT yesterday sold Hord Wintemans, Europe's third-largest cigar-maker, to a Danish tobacco firm, ST, for £55 million. BAT holds 32.15 per cent of the Copenhagen firm.

## Fashion-free Dunn & Co loses the thread again

**R**OGER COOKE

**T**RADITIONAL menswear retailer Dunn & Co went into receivership again yesterday, five years after the name was saved by Hodges of south Wales. More than 400 jobs are at risk at the Swansea head office and 130 shops, mainly in the South and South-west of England.

Receiver Paul Jeffery of accountants KPMG said Dunn & Co would continue to trade for the time being and he hoped to find a buyer. Losses of £1 million a year were a result of the company's stagnating market.

"Dunn & Co is a well-known High Street brand and we are very confident that it can be sold as a going concern. It has been around for a long time. We are planning out hopes on someone thinking they can run it better."

The name dates back to 1886 but its formula of tweeds and formal suits, sold in small shops, has become steadily more difficult to operate profitably. The company first went bust in 1991 but the name was saved, with 38 shops, by Hodges.

Two years ago there was another restructuring and the bulk of the company is now owned by venture capital company Cliven. Sales last year were £25 million.

• A total of 336 jobs will be lost today at Crawford's, the Scottish bakery chain which went into receivership in September.

Receivers have decided to close 47 shops with the loss of 270 jobs, while a bakery in Edinburgh is shedding 68 staff. Another 394 staff are being kept at 37 shops and in the restaurant division as receivers try to sell parts of the business as a going concern.

## £50 a head the cost of Halifax changing status

**T**ERESA HUNTER

**P**LANS by the Halifax building society to become a bank will cost each of its savers and borrowers around £50, as the total conversion bill soars to around £200 million.

Profits at Britain's biggest mortgage lender look set to fall this year — dragged down by the on-going cost of merging with the Leeds Permanent and abandoning its mutual status. Yet 10 million of its members can look forward to a windfall of around £1,000 in June if, at a special meeting in February, they give the green light for the Halifax to become a public company.

Next month members will receive a transfer statement, which, like a prospectus, will outline the society's reasons for becoming a bank.

The statement will highlight pre-tax profits of £752 million for the nine months to October 31, which

the Halifax yesterday announced to the Stock Exchange. This compares with £1.2 billion profits for the 12 months to January 1996.

A Halifax spokesman said: "We are not making any predictions about our profits for the year, but it is possible that they will be lower than last year when the costs associated with conversion are taken into account."

Excluding exceptional items, pre-tax profit in the first nine months rose 9 per cent. Its new mortgage lending of £1.2 billion has crept up slightly from 7 per cent of the market when it announced its half-year results to 9 per cent.

But the merger cost the Halifax £25 million last year and £90 million during the first nine months of this — largely spent closing 140 branches, merging computers and shedding staff. The meeting will cost £149 million, and four mallings connected with the flotation inflate the bill a further £40 million.

## Christmas cheer

### Vauxhall buys back into vans

**M**ARK MILLNER, Deputy Financial Editor

**V**AUXHALL is joining forces with Renault in a £180 million project expected to create at least 900 jobs in Britain and re-establish the Luton-based manufacturer in the van market.

The deal involves IBC Vehicles, which is 82 per cent owned by Vauxhall's US parent, General Motors, manufacturing a medium-sized van to be developed at Renault's French design centre.

Production of the van will not start until the turn of the century, in the meantime, Renault will supply IBC with

its Trafic model, to be sold in the UK as the Vauxhall Arena and in continental Europe under the badge of Adam Opel. GM's German subsidiary, Renault will also supply Vauxhall and Opel with heavier vans.

Though the van project will run beyond 2010, Nick Reilly, chairman and managing director of Vauxhall and chairman of IBC, said there were no plans to co-operate on cars.

"This agreement is strictly related to vans."

The deal will bring Vauxhall back into the medium-van sector, with the Trafic filling the gap left since IBC stopped making the M10, and the heavy end of the market

where it has not competed since the days of Bedford.

IBC, in which Japanese car-maker Isuzu holds an 18 per cent stake, makes the four-wheel drive Frontera.

The new van project will mean an investment of some £180 million split between IBC's Luton plant and tooling for suppliers, though IBC will not break down the split between the two.

According to Mr Reilly, the investment will bring at least 900 extra jobs at Luton, taking the workforce to 2,700.

A Renault spokesman said: "The European van market is extremely competitive. The agreement will give us economies of scale."

## Blunder rectified on the double

**S**CROOGE appeared on the scene yesterday before Halifax customers had even thought about spending an early Christmas present — double pay-outs made a simple error and the machine was giving out £20 notes when someone wanted £10.

"But because the error happened overnight not many withdrawals were made before it came to light."

"We know who the customers are and we have written to them explaining the situation and asking them to contact us if they received more than they should have, so we can have the money back."

## Mutual discipline

**T**HE nine-month figures from the Halifax are something of a historic quirk as it seeks to put its accounts in order ready for the conversion documents which will be circulated to members in January. Nevertheless,

## Watchdog to pull plug on children's cash prizes

**Y**OUNG and short of pocket money? Want a couple of grand? Then why not run up a soaking great phone bill trying to win the money? writes Nicholas Bannister.

Competitions using premium rate phone numbers have been booming as children catch the gambling habit nurtured by the National Lottery frenzy.

Children under 16 are banned from the entering the Lottery but nothing prevents them from taking part in — and sometimes winning — phone-line competitions offering cash prizes. Premium line prizes for children do not come in the multi-million pound league. Top which is probably about £1,500.

So after a consultation period, ICSTIS plans to

## Rocky road

**R**ENAULT'S attempts at working with overseas partners have not always been crowned with success. A planned alliance with Volvo founder on Swedish shareholder concerns that their company would be swallowed up by the French car maker. A project with Leyland Daf to develop a new van fell by the wayside when the truck and van maker's Dutch parent ran into a financial crisis.

This time Renault is teaming up with the General Motors stable through IBC, where GM is the majority shareholder and Japan's Isuzu — itself around 38 per cent owned by the US car maker — holds a modest 18 per cent stake.

GM's size and financial clout means that this time round Renault is unlikely (to say the least) to hit either of the problems that have upset previous efforts. The French group will no doubt be relieved, in a European market which is fiercely competitive and, arguably, has too many manufacturers, alliances, however limited, can come in very handy.

Certainly the deal will fill the gap left by the collapse of the deal with Daf. But there is no suggestion that it will extend into the industry heartland, cars. Renault still lacks the extra edge that the Volvo alliance would have brought.

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change its code of practice for the 265 million premium rate competition sector so children under 18 will be unable to win cash prizes in premium-line competitions offering cash prizes. Premium line prizes for children do not come in the multi-million pound league. Top which is probably about £1,500.

So after a consultation period, ICSTIS plans to

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.052	France 4.522	Italy 2.516	Singapore 2.29
Austria 17.51	Germany 2.532	Japan 1.257	South Africa 7.25
Belgium 82.10	Greece 404.35	Netherlands 2.245	Spain 212.00
Canada 2.24	Hong Kong 12.84	New Zealand 2.205	Sweden 11.312
Cyprus 0.765	India 80.05	Norway 10.57	Switzerland 2.185
Denmark 2.25	Ireland 0.577	Portugal 265.20	Turkey 17.809
Finland 7.898	Israel 5.16	Saudi Arabia 5.242	USA 1.2575

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding India rupee and Brazil shekel).

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OECD says some efforts to meet European currency criteria are short-sighted and may harm growth

# Budget cutters warned

Larry Elliott  
Economics Editor

EUROPEAN countries intent on slashing budget deficits to qualify for monetary union in 1999 run the risk of damaging their short-term growth prospects, the West's leading economic think-tank said last night.

While supporting the drive for reduced borrowing, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development warned that the process should be gradual and credible.

The OECD said that after this year's sluggish performance in the European Union it expected a slight pick-up in growth from 1.6 per cent to 2.4 per cent next year.

However, the Paris-based club's half-yearly report on the world economy said that this would be offset by slower growth in the United States and Japan, leaving the overall rate unchanged at 2.4 per cent.

The think-tank concluded that growth of output and living standards over the 1990s was "likely to fall well short of post-war achievements in all major OECD countries".

It added: "Improving on this relatively weak perfor-

mance would raise material living standards as well as provide the resources to meet long-standing social goals, including an acceptable distribution of income, the elimination of poverty and the protection of the most vulnerable members of society."

According to the OECD, economic performance in the West's richest nations could be helped by a "judicious use of monetary policy, together with credible, sustained fiscal consolidations over time without heavy concentration of restraint in a short span of time."

The Maastricht convergence criteria for a single currency stipulate that countries should have a budget deficit of no more than 3 per cent of GDP a year, a target that most of the continental countries are pledged to meet by next year's cut-off date.

However, the OECD expressed strong reservations about the methods used by some governments to improve their short-term fiscal position.

"Reliance on one-off measures, such as capital transfers from publicly owned enterprises, or on measures that may have to be reversed, including some public-sector wage freezes and deferrals of public investments, only delay the need for more

## Target Emu: big four on course?

Country	1996	1997	1998	1999
Germany	2.2	1.2	10.4	-3.4
France	2.6	1.3	10.1	-2.6
Italy	2.5	1.3	12.5	-3.2
Spain	2.6	1.4	12.1	-3.0
UK	1.2	2.8	12.2	-3.7
US	2.1	2.5	11.6	-3.4
Japan	3.3	2.2	7.4	-5.7
OECD	2.0	1.9	7.0	-3.0

fundamental fiscal adjustments."

The report added that concrete plans for cutting budget deficits were only half the solution to bringing down unemployment, which is forecast to fall only marginally, from 11.4 per cent of the EU workforce in 1996 to 11.3 per cent next year.

"It will also require that structural reform be undertaken on a wide front in order to increase the efficiency of

the use of scarce resources as well as to enhance innovativeness and the adaptability of OECD economies to changes brought about by globalisation and new technologies."

But, while backing the deregulatory approach favoured by the US and the UK, the think-tank stressed that tackling "the problems associated with poverty and exclusion" posed significant challenges for the developed West.

"In many countries, particularly in Europe, these problems have been aggravated by the rise in structural and long-term unemployment during the past 25 years."

"In other countries, particularly the US and the UK but also some continental European countries, there are concerns that rising wage and income inequality have had adverse social consequences."

regularly in Europe, these problems have been aggravated by the rise in structural and long-term unemployment during the past 25 years."

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The report predicted that inflationary pressure across the West would remain weak for the next two years. The EU is expected to see prices rise by only 2 per cent a year in 1997 and 1998.

Short-term interest rates are seen as staying at around their current low level, but progress in bringing down unemployment will be slow. Germany and France are forecast to see slight rises in the jobless totals in 1997, before the effect of easier monetary policy starts to shorten the

dole queues in 1998.



Pugnacious Archie Norman says Asda's sales growth has eclipsed all rivals

PHOTOGRAPH: ROSS PARRY

## Asda beats rivals without resorting to card tricks

**ROGER COWE on stores chief punching home simple message**

ARCHIE Norman presented his first results as chairman of the Asda supermarket chain yesterday with the same combination of soaring figures and populist rhetoric that became a habit in his five years as chief executive.

Mr Norman, who moved up to allow time for his political ambitions as Conservative candidate for Tunbridge Wells, reported that Asda's sales had again grown faster than any of its rivals' over the past six months, its return on capital had overtaken the industry average and the chain was on course to overtake both BHS and C&A to become Britain's second-largest family clothing store.

Sales grew by more than 10 per cent on a comparable basis, to almost £3.5 billion, fired by 15 per cent growth in fresh foods and an increase of a third in the George clothing range. Operating profit rose by almost a fifth, despite pressure on profit margins from the petrol price wars.

With the addition of £73 million from the sale of Asda's stake in the Allied carpet business, pre-tax profit rose from £138 million to £240 million.

New chief executive Alan Leighton admitted that the scale of sales growth had taken the company by surprise. He said it was a

result of maintaining simplicity and a focus on value for money, while rivals added cost with gimmicks such as loyalty cards.

Asda has tested a loyalty card scheme in 20 stores but is not ready to go ahead across the chain. "We have the nuclear capability," Mr Norman said, "but we are keeping our fingers off the trigger."

Mr Leighton said there was still scope for sales growth if Asda could capitalise on the size of its stores, which are 50 per cent larger than the industry average.

He aims to expand fresh food and clothing at the expense of several home and leisure categories. Paint, car parts and household textiles have already gone, and the range will continue to contract, concentrating on books, cards, newspapers and magazines as well as music and video.

Mr Leighton said the biggest hurdle to expanding clothes sales had been overcome with customers' acceptance of buying clothes along with their groceries.

## Property dealer cleared of bribing tax investigator

Dan Atkinson

DAVID Shamoon, the 66-year-old property dealer famed for having spent £38 million in London casinos over a nine-year period, was yesterday declared not guilty on a charge of bribing a senior tax officer.

Jurors at the Old Bailey acquitted Mr Shamoon on the orders of Judge Peter Beaumont.

Reasons for the dramatic turn of events during the trial of former Inland Revenue investigator Michael Alcock will not be made public, on the judge's orders, until after the end of the case.

Mr Shamoon, of West Kensington, London, walked free after the verdict. As a result of his acquittal, "mirror" allegations against Mr Alcock of having accepted the bribe allegedly on offer from Mr Shamoon were dropped.

At the trial's opening in



David Shamoon: Judge orders acquittal

October, Mr Shamoon — a businessman believed to have links with the Kuwaiti royal family — pleaded not guilty to having provided Mr Alcock and his mistress, Michelle Corrigan, with an all-expenses-paid holiday in Marbella in return for protection from investigation into his tax affairs.

Another charge against Mr Alcock — that of having corruptly accepted hotel accommodation in Nice from a man who cannot be named for legal reasons — also ended in acquittal at the judge's direction yesterday.

Mr Alcock still faces 11 charges of corruption. Co-defendant Hisham Alwan — a 56-year-old oil consultant based in Knightsbridge — denies three charges of bribing Mr Alcock.

The Crown claims Mr Alcock ensured Mr Alwan did not have to pay back-tax in return for hotel bills and the services of Miss Corrigan, then a prostitute.

On other counts, the Crown alleges Mr Alcock took bribes from other wealthy businessmen in return for favourable tax treatment. He denies all charges. The case was adjourned until January 2.

Chris Barrie

THE engineering group GKN suffered a setback in the US yesterday when it lost the first round of a legal battle in North Carolina against its own franchisees which could cost the group up to \$554 million (£334 million).

A jury in the Charlotte District Court decided that GKN and its Meineke Discount Muffler Shops subsidiary should make payments to the franchisees over allegations that GKN failed to hand over money associated with advertising campaigns.

Although GKN said that the verdict was complex and needed further analysis, the size of the pay-out stunned the City. GKN shares fell 3.5 per cent to close at \$10.09 as investors absorbed the possibility that GKN's \$483 million cash balance may be wiped out.

GKN put the aggregate amount of the award at \$996 million, but the final pay-

ments may be higher if the judge decides punitive damages are appropriate. The company said it would appeal against the "wholly unreasonable" outcome and take a provision in the 1996 accounts to cover the case. It stressed that the dividend would not be endangered.

The case was filed three years ago and centres on allegations that Meineke and its affiliates misappropriated funds each dealer contributed to support advertising since 1982. An appeal will take up to 18 months.

The existence of the case had been disclosed in the GKN annual report but without an indication that the damages had the potential to be so high.

There was speculation in the City that the case could cramp GKN's ability to participate in further defence industry restructuring. The group, which makes helicopters, motor parts and armoured vehicles, has been touted as a bidder for the tank maker Vickers.

## News in brief

### Money supply figures increase rate fears

THE City last night shortened the odds on a new year rise in interest rates after Bank of England figures showed a sharper than expected growth in the money supply last month. M4 — cash, bank and building society deposits — increased by 10.8 per cent on the year, up from 10.3 per cent in October. Analysts said the M4 data was supported by strong demand for loans. Figures from the Building Societies Association showed new mortgage approvals fell to £3.6 billion from £3.9 billion in October, but Adrian Coles, BSA director general, said: "The underlying trend is firmly upwards with advances and approvals significantly higher than in the same month last year."

The slight fall in lending in November is not a sign of a faltering recovery but rather that it is more stable and likely to be sustainable in the longer term.

The British Bankers Association said lending by the big high street lenders rose by £4.5 billion in November, well up on the six-month average of £2.95 billion even after a one-off transaction of £800 million was stripped out. — Larry Elliott

### Trainspotter's delight

GERMAN and Italian trains could be running on the £2.8 billion Channel Tunnel high-speed rail link when it opens in 2003, it emerged yesterday as a bill authorising construction of the 88-mile line from London to Folkestone, Kent, received its Royal Assent. The legislation requires the link to be made available to other European rail companies under the European open access agreement. This means that Germany, with its inter-city express trains, Italy, with its high-speed tilting trains, or Spain with its express service Ave could all make use of it.

"The opportunity is there and obviously we would look at any deal on commercial terms," said Sir Derek Horeby, chairman of London & Continental Railways, the consortium building and running the link. The link will chop 45 minutes off journey times between London and Paris and Brussels. Passengers will reach Brussels from London in two hours, with a 2-hour 15-minute journey time to Paris. — PA

### Watchdog claim 'unfounded'

BRITISH Telecom's claim that Otel's director-general, Don Cruickshank, had usurped powers properly held by the Trade and Industry Secretary and the Monopolies Commission was unfounded, the High Court was told yesterday.

Stephen Richards, QC for the telecom regulator Otel, said Mr Cruickshank's inclusion of a sweeping clause in BT's licence prohibiting anti-competitive behaviour could have been challenged by the company under the existing rules. The issue would have been referred to the Monopolies Commission if BT had refused to accept the change. The Trade Secretary could also have intervened but did not, Mr Richards told the judicial review of Mr Cruickshank's decision. The European Commission's competition directorate had written to Mr Cruickshank saying it was happy with the clause, which BT claimed would conflict with EC competition laws. Mr Richards said Mr Cruickshank regarded anti-competitive conduct as "unacceptable" and considered there would be an increasing risk of such conduct as BT's market opened to more competition.

Judgment was reserved until today. — Nicholas Bannister

### Dominion breaks 50pc barrier

MORE than half the shares in East Midlands Electricity passed into American hands last night when Dominion Resources said it had bought 23.7 million shares in the regional electricity company for \$306 million. The purchase, carried out by SBC Warburg at Dominion's offer price of 67p a share, means the US utility has acceptance from shareholders speaking for 50.6 per cent of the equity. The offer closing date is January 10. Northern Electric will hear later today whether it has managed to escape the hostile takeover mounted by US utility GE Electric. — Chris Barrie

### Airtours prepares Med cruise

AIRTOURS, the UK's second-largest tour operator, is joining with cruise operator Carnival to buy the Italian cruise ship company Costa Crociere next spring for £181 million in cash. Airtours, which is 30 per cent owned by Carnival, will pay half of the purchase price. Costa Crociere is based in Genoa and operates 10 ships, mainly in the Mediterranean. Airtours and Carnival said they would pay for the acquisition from their existing resources. Airtours predicted cruises would become increasingly popular in the UK and Scandinavian markets. Costa had a pre-tax profit of £18.1 million in 1995. — Pauline Springett

### Rank fails to win applause

SHARES in Rank Group slumped by 24½p to 417½p yesterday despite finalisation of the sale of its holiday coach business, Shearings, for more than £100 million. Investors were disappointed by the company's second-half trading statement, which showed operating profits growth in line with the first half of the year. Underlying operating profits rose by 12 per cent to £93 million. There had been hopes that the company, which owns the Hard Rock cafe chain and the Odeon group of cinemas, would show more evidence of its new focus on entertainment and leisure. — Lisa Buckingham

**PRODUCT RECALL NOTICE**

**Waitrose prepacked Mince Pies**

Waitrose 6 Shortcrust mince pies  
Waitrose 12 Shortcrust mince pies  
Waitrose 6 Luxury mince pies  
Waitrose 6 Select mince pies

*The mincemeat in a few pies has been contaminated with small pieces of rubber*

*Customers who have purchased any of the above packs dated before 15 January are requested to return them to us. A full refund will be given as well as an alternative product.*

**No other mince pies are affected**

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# Irresponsible whip rule is hit for six

Chris Hawkes

CHANGES to the controversial whip rule, which brought racing so much unnecessary bad publicity during the recent flat season, mean that from next February jockeys cannot be handed merely for hitting a horse more than six times in a finish.

This is the crucial point in a thorough revision of the rule announced yesterday by the Jockey Club, concerned that the old instructions to stewards were penalising good riding.

"People had become obsessed with counting strokes," said Christopher Hall, chairman of the disciplinary committee. "So we have done away with the six-hit trigger mechanism which was causing the difficulties and have given the stewards greater discretion."

"We have set out clearly the good ways of using the whip and also examples of improper riding. In future stewards will assess a jockey's performance against these criteria."

"Veterinary officers will be asked to examine all placed horses and a random selection of others after a race and will report findings to the stewards."

Thus the emphasis in future will be on how the whip is used rather than how many times it is used.

There are 11 examples of misuse or improper riding in

the new instructions, including raising the whip above the shoulder, hitting rapidly without regard to a horse's stride, hitting when a horse is on the quarters or shoulder and hitting with excessive frequency.

Excessive use will depend on whether the numbers of hits was reasonable and necessary over the distance they were given and the degree of force used.

Hall explained that once the stewards, who will attend a training day to absorb the new rules, were satisfied an offence had been committed they would consult with the stewards' secretaries for advice on penalties handed out in similar instances; consistency being the aim here.

Although the revised instructions represent a relaxation, stewards will be asked to deal more strictly with serious offences and a four-day suspension will be the minimum for excessive force.

If a horse has been injured the case is likely to be referred to Portman Square. Hall was delighted to report that there were no instances of horses being injured last season.

Calls from the RSPCA and others for horses to be disqualified when a jockey has been found guilty of excessive use have sensibly been ignored by the Jockey Club.

But Bernard Donigan, spokesman for the RSPCA, is not unhappy with the new in-



Bright prospect... Red Blazer makes an impressive start to his hurdling career at Towcester

It is a complaint about what they've done. The greater involvement of the vets is a step in the right direction, he said.

Of more immediate concern is Boxing Day's King George VI Chase at Kempton in which Sound Man has been declared but is thought unlikely to run by Edward O'Grady.

"I would say he's more likely to go for the Comet Chase over two miles and three furlongs at Ascot in February and he probably won't run again before then," said the trainer, who has doubts about Sound Man's stamina.

Another factor in the decision is that Richard Dunwoody, Sound Man's regular

partner, would almost certainly have chosen to ride One Man, who is now quoted at 8-13 by Hill's to win for the second successive year.

At Towcester yesterday, Red Blazer lit up a grey afternoon with a resounding 12 lengths success on his hurdling debut. Trainer Henrietta Knight has big plans for the former top bumper horse.

"We have absolutely no intention of aiming low," she said. "We're going to aim high, as he has real class."

Miss Knight, who describes Red Blazer as "the friendliest horse you can imagine" explained that the gelding had broken down badly at Liverpool in his only race last season and will never be risked on fast ground again.

## Hereford

1.50 Night City	2.30 Western Star
1.50 Desert	2.30 Fleet Captain
1.50 Urban Lily	2.30 Wandering Light
	2.50 Matchmaker Bard

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## Lingfield all-weather Flat card

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Soccer

Clark does the honest thing to the last

Peter White and Ian Ross on the Forest manager's ultimate sacrifice

WHEN all else failed, Frank Clark decided the ultimate sacrifice was the only avenue open to him to try to ensure that Nottingham Forest recover from their wretched season and preserve their Premiership status. That is why he handed in his resignation yesterday and, after 3 1/2 years as manager, said farewell to the club he loved.

Forest are rooted to the foot of the table with a win in 18 matches — a Premiership record — and with only 10 points from 17 games. The 4-2

'I resigned in hope that it will give the team a short-term lift. It was the best thing I could do'

defeat at Anfield on Tuesday was the final straw. "I saw certain warning signs in that display," he said. "I have resigned in the hope that it will give the team a short-term lift. I felt it was the best thing I could do."

His departure, 18 months before his contract was due to expire, gives Stuart Pearce, the club's long-serving full-back, the chance to take his first step on the managerial ladder, albeit as caretaker. Pearce, who has captained Forest and England, meets the chairman Irving Korn today and is expected to accept the position until an extraordinary meeting of shareholders next month decides who will be the new owners of Forest.

Clark said Pearce, 34, will probably continue as an apprentice to a more experienced man. The former Leeds United manager Howard Wilkinson is a possible candidate for the permanent position. Clark said: "I feel it is a wise decision by the board to

invite Stuart to become caretaker. If anyone can lift the players, I am sure he can. I tried everything I knew but in the end I ran out of ideas. It is vital the team get a couple of victories to transform the whole picture. Injuries, loss of form and players not performing as well as they could, plus the whole situation surrounding the club, all added up to my resigning."

It ends an era that was never easy but reached such heights in the middle, when Forest set a Premiership record of 25 games without defeat, that is why he handed in his resignation yesterday. When Clark accepted the position, Forest had just subsided to the First Division under the falling powers of Brian Clough. Clark, returning to the club where he had been a successful player for three years — culminating in a winner's medal in the European Cup in 1979 — stamped his own authority on Forest and took them straight back up.

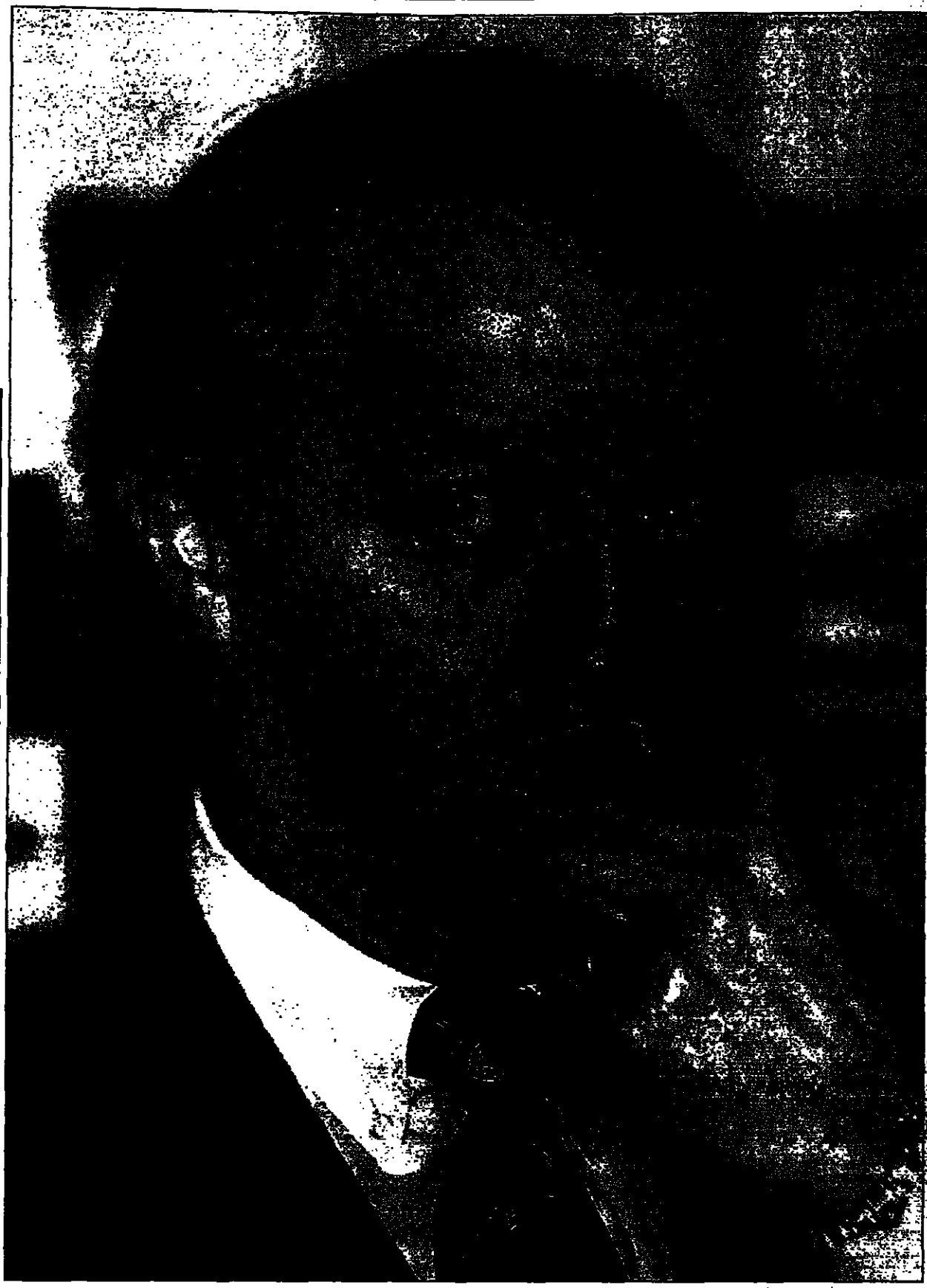
A return to European competition quickly followed. Less than a year ago Forest were again in Europe, reaching the quarter-finals of the Uefa Cup. This season began full of expectation, reinforced when Forest comprehensively won at Coventry on the opening day. It was Clark's last league victory.

Clark is unlikely to be out of work for long. He remains one of the game's most respected managers. Manchester City are desperate for someone of experience to restore credibility. But there will be other options. Three years ago he was being touted as a possible England manager; he could fit the bill as the FA's technical director. He may also be offered work abroad.

He said last night: "I have nothing lined up but I do not know what might happen tomorrow or the day after. I would like to think I could take three months off but I must update my CV and start looking."

"It is a sad day for the club; Frank is a good and honest person," Pearce said, echoing the feelings of the Forest players who might have been good enough themselves but not honest enough.

Everyone, it seems, loves Clark, a decent and diligent man of mournful expression for whom nobody appears to have a bad word. His style,



End of the Forest road... 'I tried everything I knew but in the end I ran out of ideas' — Frank Clark yesterday

when he is asked awkward, searching or even downright impertinent questions, has always been to fend them off with the straight bat of honesty and an amiable twinkle.

At Anfield this week he was generous in praise of Stan Collymore, who had scored twice against his former club. It was Clark who had promoted Collymore from promising extra to leading man in taking him from Southampton to Forest. The reward was sweet and sour: the goals that helped lift Forest back into

the Premiership, but an unseemly public falling-out which hastened Collymore's defection to Liverpool.

Clark had no need to talk of Collymore; it was a case of simple good manners. Clark, above all, deserved better than the problems off the pitch. Forest have debts so high that the entire first-team squad were recently rumored to have been put up for auction. It would have been the mother of all car-boot sales.

Salvation may come via a takeover next month by one of the competing consortiums — a two-horse race with both beasts claiming to have Robin Hood aboard. Both had promised Clark about £15 million to peg up the side but when he quit yesterday he had not seen a penny of it. "We have been operating in limbo," he said 10 days ago. "It is difficult to manage a club in the current environment."

Even his most sympathetic supporter, though, would be hard pressed to defend his recent record in the strikers market: Bryan Roy (£2.5 million), Kevin Campbell (£3.5m), Andrea Silenzi (£1.5m) and Dean Saunders (£1.5m). This season he has badly missed Steve Shepe, out with injury. At the same time players of undoubted skill, such as Ian Woan and Scott Gemmill, have performed with baffling ineptitude.

Clark's honourable resignation does at least leave him free to enjoy a stress-free family Christmas — unless, of course, he were to take over at Manchester City.

Falkirk's chairman George Fulston said: "It should have been spotted by someone at the club but unfortunately I was on holiday at the time. If I had been there I would have known about the rule. I can only apologise to the club for not being there."

Newcastle plan stirs up opposition

Peter Hetherington and Pauline Spraggott

IT WAS labelled Britain's most ambitious stadium redevelopment in half a century by a Newcastle United director, but by last night it was clear the Premiership club's ambitious plan for a £200 million, three-tier ground similar to Milan's San Siro to replace St James' Park faces growing opposition from a small army of local protesters.

The future surrounding the plans, which include turning St James' Park into a multi-purpose, covered sports complex at a further cost of £25 million, overshadowed the club's confirmation that it was seeking a stock market flotation that their joint chief executive Mark Cougle said would "assist in the financing of the next phase of the company's growth."

Newcastle's chairman Sir John Hall could not hide his irritation with opponents to the new stadium when he unveiled the scheme yesterday behind a ring of police security normally reserved for match days, with a small group of placard-waving demonstrators outside.

He lost his temper when questioned about the possibility of a public inquiry into the contentious scheme to build on Town Moor, a protected public parkland close to St James' Park.

He thundered: "You've criticised us so much in the past. I'm sure if you go and ask all the fans you'll get tens of thousands of them saying this is tremendous for the future of Newcastle United."

He continued: "We have a duty to make a planning application and that will be the case. It's part of our duty as developers — we know the system."

The saga of United's future home has been dominating local politics, with the club's board apparently losing patience with a faction-ridden Newcastle City Council and

courting neighbouring Gateshead. The club have earmarked a site south of the Tyne in a redevelopment zone the existing athletics stadium and it is clearly an option if the planning process proves tiresome for a restless board.

But, in a move which appeared to turn this issue, Newcastle City Council invited the club to submit plans for the Town Moor, which is run by an old guild, the Freezemeo of Newcastle.

The council offered some of its own parkland to the Freezemeo in a land-swap deal. Local allotment holders have already been given notice to quit. As the Freezemeo approved the plan, this move, protesters in the Moir campaign, waving an 18,000-signature petition, promised to block the scheme.

Dolly Potter, a retired inspector of historic buildings who is helping to lead the campaign, maintained that United were underestimating the opposition. "Hundreds of fans have signed our petition. They support the club but don't want the stadium here in a public open space. However attractive they make it, they will not win over the public."

Funds raised from the flotation, which analysts expect to value the club at about £160 million, will help pay for the new stadium and will also be used to repay a large slice of the £50 million invested in the club by Sir John, who owns 90 per cent of Newcastle's shares.

Newcastle could find themselves with a value four times as much as their projected turnover for the 1996-97 season despite the club's £11 million loss last year. The club is expected to be in the red this year as well.

Premier League urged to fund ground improvements

THE Government has urged the Premier League to give financial support to lower-division clubs so that they can meet the 1999 deadline for ground-safety improvements.

After a report detailing the Football Trust's money crisis, the sports minister Iain Sproust yesterday reaffirmed the Government's commitment to deliver the Taylor report recommendations on the Hillsborough disaster in three years' time.

The trust, which gives grants for ground improvements, played a key part in funding the transformation of the Premier League clubs' rundown homes into all-seater stadiums. But it faces problems because income from pools companies has plummeted after the National Lottery.

Since the introduction of the Lottery two years ago the trust's income has slumped from a reported £37 million a year to £15 million, and Sproust has been looking at other ways of obtaining the

necessary money. The Premier League and the Littlewoods pools company are his targets.

But the Premier League's chief executive Rick Parry stonewalled in response last night and suggested that what the Lottery has taken away the Lottery should put back, saying that the decline in the trust's income was "a matter of concern to everyone connected with football."

He added: "If the Royal Opera House can benefit from huge Lottery grants, why is it that the smaller clubs, so vital to local communities, cannot receive some form of help?"

In a letter to the trust chairman Lord Aberdeen, Sproust said: "I do have considerable sympathy with your position... I have noted Littlewoods' decision to withdraw their contribution from Spot The Ball, which was used to fund on-going safety work. We will be writing to urge them to maintain their fine record of support."

PFA reassures players after damages ruling

THE players' union leader Gordon Taylor yesterday told his members they have nothing to fear from the courts as long as they remain within the boundaries of acceptable behaviour on the pitch, after a High Court awarded £250,000 to a player whose career was ended by a tackle.

Taylor, the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, was speaking after Mr Justice Ian Kennedy ruled that the Swansea

captain John Cornforth's challenge on the former Stockport player Brian McCord was "inconsistent" with taking reasonable care during a game with Stockport in March 1993.

The tackle inflicted "horrific injuries" to McCord's right leg, ruling him out of the game permanently, and he is now studying to become a solicitor. Although this was not the first award of compensation in such circum-

stances, the amount of money involved is likely to cause a major impact on all sport.

Taylor admitted: "It sends a warning to players that the pitch is not an oasis that is outside the law of the land."

"But players will have nothing to worry about so long as they adhere to the accepted code of conduct. It's when they go beyond those realms that they are open to legal challenge. The £250,000 tackle, page 2.

Falkirk ordered to replay for using ineligible player

FALKIRK have been ordered to replay their match against St Mirren for fielding an ineligible player. It is the first time the Scottish League, which also fined the club £25,000, has made such a judgment.

John Clark scored the only goal of the game earlier in the season but should not have played because a year had not elapsed between him leaving Falkirk for Dunfer-

line and rejoining the First Division club.

Although Falkirk, who are joint second in the division, subsequently released him, a Scottish League rules state that there must be a year's gap before a player can rejoin his former club unless special permission is given.

Falkirk and St Mirren will have talks over the date for the game, either January 7 or 8.

Falkirk's chairman George Fulston said: "It should have been spotted by someone at the club but unfortunately I was on holiday at the time. If I had been there I would have known about the rule. I can only apologise to the club for not being there."

Feyenoord are ready to enter negotiations with Celtic for the striker Pierre van Hooydonk, who wants to leave the Glasgow club.

Tennis

Court setback for Seles claim

Ian Traynor in Bonn

MONICA SELES lost her £10 million claim for damages and loss of earnings against the German tennis federation yesterday and was ordered to pay costs. The case was brought after the attack in 1993 by Günther Parche, who stabbed her in the back on a Hamburg tennis court.

Seles, who has not visited Germany since her comeback last year, is believed to be considering an appeal, after the court upheld the federation's contention that its security arrangements were not substandard.

"We don't want tennis in a cage," said a federation spokesman. "If the verdict had been different we would have had to think about whether we could continue to stage tournaments." Jane Wood, the left-handed British No. 7 from Middlesex, won the BWA Christmas tournament at Queen's Club, beating Emily Bone of Gloucestershire 2-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Snooker

Board has to take a break

Give Everton

THE game's governing body put itself into bank over a technicality yesterday when its annual meeting in Bristol was adjourned until the New Year because not enough board members had been nominated for re-election.

According to the rules of World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association Ltd, as near to one-third as possible (ie two) of the six-strong board should submit themselves for re-election.

The former chairman John Spencer and Bill Oliver were originally nominated for this but apparently the board did not understand that Spencer's resignation last month meant that another man, from a board now down to five, had to stand again.

On the rotation principle, this proved to be the Bangkok businessman Sindhui Palsirivong, but the decision came too late for his name to be included on the proxy ballot forms. The sign and election have now been postponed for at least three weeks.

Rugby League

Kear quits Academy for Eagles

Paul Fitzpatrick

JOHN KEAR has left his job as the Rugby League's Academy coaching executive to become football executive at Sheffield Eagles, where his friend Phil Larder is the new coach.

The RL does not intend to replace Kear immediately because its chief executive Maurice Lindsay wants to see how the unification process of the sport's two governing bodies progresses.

Kear was an assistant to Larder on the 1992 Great Britain tour of Australasia and has been involved in the international set-up ever since.

Meanwhile, Hugh McCahan, Leeds Rhinos' football manager since July 1995, is returning to his native New Zealand to become marketing manager of the Super League team.

Wigan are to seek clarification over the selection of three of their players for the Super League World Nines tournament in Townsville, Australia next month. The competition is being held a

Ice Hockey

Britain gear up to meet world challenge

Vic Batchelder

WITH their Olympic chances hanging by a thread, Great Britain are already preparing to improve their global ranking at the world championship Pool B competition in Katowice in April.

The event will provide them with the opportunity to gain revenge against Switzerland, who drew 3-3 at Sheffield on Wednesday and so lost their final game against Denmark tomorrow to draw level with Britain and advance at their expense to the Olympic

elimination tournament next February by virtue of a superior goal difference.

The Swiss are among the seven teams who will be in Poland trying to secure the one promotion place to world championship Pool A.

In the past Britain have been poorly prepared for such events, as for example in 1994 on their last appearance in Pool A. Then most of the squad played for their club sides in the British Championship finals at Wembley before flying to Bolzano on the Monday in time for their first game, against Russia, the following day.

Referring to that, Nico Toemen said that after a home game with Japan in February, Britain will meet Austria, another Pool B team, in Vienna on April 6 as part of a six-day training camp before flying on to Poland.

Sport in brief

Cricket

England have given their conditional backing to a World Championship Test cricket series to be played in 1997. The Wisden editor Matthew Engel, who stresses the potential for "huge sponsorship", said: "There are obvious advantages," said the Test and County Cricket Board chief executive Tim Lamb. Pakistan and South Africa are also in favour.

Nixon McLean, in for the resting Curly Ambrose, took five wickets yesterday but poor fielding was costly for the West Indians at Wanganui, where Graeme Vimpani scored his maiden first-class century for Victoria.

Results

Soccer

NOTTINGHAM LEAGUE CUP: Group Four: Nottingham v Grimsby, 1-0; Grimsby v Nottingham, 1-0. Group Five: Grimsby v Nottingham, 1-0; Nottingham v Grimsby, 1-0. Group Six: Grimsby v Nottingham, 1-0; Nottingham v Grimsby, 1-0.

Tennis

Cricket

Ice Hockey

Chess

Table Tennis

Badminton

Table Tennis

Ice Hockey

County Durham International

After the Ethiopian federation ruled their athletes, demanding a larger appearance fee, but intervention by the IAAF means that last year's winner Assefa Mezgebu and the women's world champion Gete Wami will run on Saturday week.

Skating

Italy's triple Olympic champion Alberto Tomba, 30 on Thursday, has pulled out of the World Cup giant slalom meeting in his home town on Sunday. Injured during training in October, he returned on Tuesday for the first time this season and finished a remarkable second in a slalom at Madonna di Campiglio. He is unhappy about risking further injury on the demanding Alta Badia course.

Cross Country

Cricket

Cricket

Cricket

Cricket

Cricket

Cricket

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BT Global Challenge

Rescue alert as Concert loses mast

Heavy seas and equipment problems in the Southern Ocean: Simon Montague reports from on board Nuclear Electric

A RESCUE mission was under way last night to reach the stricken BT Global Challenge yacht Concert, which has been dismasted in the Southern Ocean 2,000 miles east of New Zealand.

Most of the mast was lost after one of the supporting cables snapped in heavy seas. None of the 14 crew was injured and the 67ft steel hull remains intact. Together with the other yachts in the fleet, our crew aboard Nuclear Electric are standing by to give diesel fuel to Concert, which is motoring towards the nearest land, the tiny Chatham Island some 1,500 miles away.

Concert was lying fifth when the mast collapsed. It followed reports of rigging problems on three other yachts in the 14-strong fleet, each skippered by professionals with fare-paying crews, and last night Commercial Union joined the list of boats reporting broken strands in their rigging cables.

Global Teamwork and Save The Children had already suffered damaged rigs, and 3Com had radioed to tell the rest of the fleet that her forestry had snapped at the connection with the mast. That crew was also being harassed with no forestry they could have been dismissed.

Concert was dismasted close to the position where British Steel II lost her rig four years ago in the British Steel Challenge, whose fleet was plagued by a series of bottle-screw failures. For Chay Blyth, the race organiser, the fear is that serious generic problems may yet develop elsewhere in the fleet of identical yachts.

All the yachts are now carrying out daily rigging checks, although the weather makes the task dangerous. The damage is thought to have been caused by the heavy seas through which the yachts have been pounding since rounding Cape Horn a fortnight ago on the second leg from Rio de Janeiro to Wellington.

The fleet are now a little over halfway across the lonely Southern Ocean where there are no passing ships to lend emergency assistance. The strain was beginning to tell before these mishaps. Not only are the crews cold, wet and tired, the signs that the yachts to be suffering concentrates the mind, even though on Nuclear Electric we appear to be okay.

The race organisers had already faced up to the burning question: should we continue on the intended course, which had been lengthened by 450 miles to prevent us arriving in Wellington too early for the scheduled reception party? Or, for safety's sake, should we be allowed to race over the shorter, direct distance? As we approached the mid-ocean point the route had to be settled once and for all.

On Friday night the news was relayed to the yachts: the longer course, confirmed only days earlier, was abandoned. The first boat reached the mark, an imaginary buoy at 52 degrees south, 120 west, a few hours later, now we are heading straight for our next stopover, 2,700 miles away.

Rounding this invisible milestone fired us more than the supposed highlight of passing Cape Horn, which sadly we never saw. Suddenly thoughts are turning to Christmas celebrations: the vacuum-packed turkey portions and the few presents on board.

We have about two weeks left to close the gap on the leaders. As I write, Nuclear Electric is mid-fleet, with Commercial Union less than three miles ahead. It may seem extraordinary but, after 4,000 miles and with more than half as much still to go, we are using radar to measure progress against them in tenths of a mile. We have renewed the duel we had off Argentina three weeks ago, and to be in sight again of another yacht is a tonic.

On deck there was a brief interlude of what passes for summer in these parts, with a moderate wind and a temperature of nearly 10C. But the wind shifted to strong winds and high seas as we follow the great-circle route back down towards the Screaming Sixties. We are battle-scarred now, and know what to expect: salt changes in furious seas, clothes damp with sweat beneath our dry suits, sunbaked sleep as the yacht slams sideways into waves, and condensation dripping from ceilings on to our sleeping bags.

So far we have not experienced a full Southern Ocean storm but the vicious squalls that tear across these desolate seas are all too familiar. Their arrival is signalled by a thin grey line on the horizon which within minutes becomes a curtain so vast and black it recalls pictures of the burning oilfields of Kuwait.

Then the squall cloud hits, with the wind gusting violently to 40 knots. Nuclear Electric heels over but remains eager as ever, driving up the face of waves 30ft high. The helmsman stands knees bent in anticipation of the trough beyond, eyes protected by ski goggles from the wind and spray. Sometimes there is no escape; in one half-hour at the wheel I was twice knocked off my feet by seas breaking into the cockpit.

We cannot complain, this is what we signed up for: exhausting, exhilarating, terrifying stuff.



Leeds united... the club's players gather their thoughts beneath the glare of the Headingley floodlights as they prepare for the Pilkington Cup fifth round. PHOTOGRAPHS: CHRIS THOMSON

Scarlets blend with white rose

Eddie Butler on how Phil Davies has helped transport Llanelli's expansive style north to Leeds, who face Gloucester tomorrow

IT WAS a stay-in-doors kind of day at Leeds RUFC. Siberian rain fell on Chandos, the old pitch of Roundhay, who merged with Headingley in a sort of City-United venture in 1992. Freezing puddles can still form on Chandos but the Headingley pitch where Ian McCoschan once strutted his stuff is now a supermarket's warm check-out area.

Amid the puddles a handful of the area's braver under-17s splashed and shivered, listening to two of the club's development officers, Mike Shelley, a large pro, and Colin Stephens, a little outside-half from Llanelli. The under-17s were probably too cold to notice the difference.

The director of rugby did not have to endure their suffering for long. Inside his office overlooking Chandos a thick fog of condensation soon formed over the windows and Phil Davies could sit back and worry about the kettle boiling and the installation of burglar alarms around his new baby, £15,000 worth of performance-analysis computer.

"There's no hiding on the pitch any more, not with this machine," said the 33-year-old Davies, who is in the first year of a contracted five at Leeds after a 14-year career at Llanelli that was interrupted only by an 18-month stint with the

South Wales Police. Davies, originally from Seven Sisters, describes that period in blue as a "strange sabbatical".

"No hiding," said Richard Palmer-Jones, Leeds's development coordinator and cameraman at all their games. "Unless you know how the machine works. There's a certain second-row forward who's been coming up with some amazing tackle counts on the stats list..."

Davies is still playing, at No. 4, and still looks too short for line-out lifts and too thick-set for No. 8. And yet in both second and back rows he won 46 caps for Wales from 1985-95, thanks to a beautifully soft

pair of hands -- for receiving and giving the ball, that is -- and a sharp mind. At the start of his international decade he was a raw youngster brought in to replace a white-haired old fool now reduced to writing about his successes; at the end he was the veteran who phoned the Wales manager to announce that he was not available for the World Cup in South Africa. "You haven't been picked anyway," was the reply.

Davies wished Wales all the best, then watched them lose pool games against New Zealand and Ireland and depart ignominiously. He stayed with Llanelli for one more season before heading north to take the helm at ambitious Leeds.

They currently lie second in the Third Division behind Hyde, having lost to Morley, Wharfedale and Lydney. "It's always easy to say but we could have won all three games," said Davies. "But we didn't so we just look ahead."

static positions insisting on picking up the ball and setting up painfully slow rucks. Leeds may be in only the Third Division, where space opens up before well coordinated attacks, but at least they practise what they preach.

Having gone through the computer and the style, Davies suggested a guided tour of the ground where the first team play. It meant leaving the office, Chandos and the rain, beneath which Stephens, still out there amid the puddles, barely had the strength to raise an arm in farewell, and heading for Headingley, which Leeds RUFC lease from Leeds RLFC in the winter months.

The surface and the surroundings are only conducive to high-grade rugby. The next two Saturdays may determine whether Leeds can make the grade.

Referees to strike in Wales

THE Welsh Rugby Union and its referees failed to resolve their dispute over match fees last night and tomorrow's strike by the officials will go ahead, writes David Plummer.

No games in the top five divisions in Wales will be played but the six scheduled Swansea Cup ties and some minor games are likely to kick off, with the WRU enlisting the services of 12 referees.

Scott Quinnell last night agreed to be available to play for Wales again, so ending a four-month dispute between the Richmond No. 8 and the WRU. A Welsh businessman, Geoff Cartwright, offered Quinnell £10,000 if he agreed to end his international exile and wear boots manufactured by the WRU's kit sponsor Reebok.

Cricket

Flower power blossoms

Paul Allott sees the former Zimbabwe captain enjoying his new-found freedom

ANDY FLOWER is no shirker and yet only six months ago he relinquished the captaincy of Zimbabwe because the job was affecting his overall performance. As opening batsman, wicketkeeper and captain his workload over 12 Test matches had finally become too much. Surprisingly his batting average while captain had become a world-class 44.25, but the cumulative responsibilities meant that something had to give.

Flower was Zimbabwe's second player to turn full-time professional, following Houghton, whom he also succeeded as the professional at West Brom-

Chess

McShane proves his mastery at 12

Leonard Barden

TWELVE-year-old Luke McShane yesterday achieved Britain's youngest International Master title by sharing second prize in the Caledonian Masters in Edinburgh.

The Westminster Under School pupil, regarded as the UK's most promising junior since Nigel Short, drew his final game against the London expert John Pigott after three hours' play and finished half a point behind the winner, the Cambridge student Mark Ferguson.

Equestrianism

Welham in Whitaker double

John Kerr at Olympia

BRITISH riders may be short on numbers but they had the fastest of six maximum scores on Virtual Village Welham, his Olympic horse, whom he rode internationally for the first time here two years ago.

The other afternoon event, also a one-round affair, was won by James Fisher on Renville, his remarkably consistent Dutch-bred eight-year-old, who is approaching 20 successes at home and abroad this season. William Punnell on Comex looked the likely winner until outpaced by Fisher. The young Brazilian Rodrigo Pessoa, an Olympic team medallist in Atlanta, was third on Loro Flama Tomboy.

Athletics

Livingston back to the big time against Jackson

Steven Downes

JASON LIVINGSTON, the ghost of seasons past, will race against Colin Jackson over 60 metres at Birmingham in the New Year, his first real test since returning to the sport last July from his four-year ban for steroid use.

Livingston, small but well muscled, was already nicknamed "Baby Ben" before he achieved the same notoriety as the disgraced Canadian Johnson by failing a drugs test and being sent home from the Olympics, in his case Barcelona in 1992.

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# SportsGuardian

## CRICKET

Zimbabwe v England: first Test, second day

# Dark clouds close in on England

David Hopps in Bulawayo

**L**IFE here changes imperceptibly. A reopened restaurant, a new shop, or even just a new face, is regarded as something of a marvel. It was appropriate, therefore, that England woke up to the second day of the first Test to discover that it was exactly like the first. There was the same enervating pitch, the same uninspired fast bowling, and yet more Zimbabwe resistance.

In their utilitarian wooden stands, assailed in turn by fierce sun and protracted rain, England's holiday-making supporters gazed upon another scene of frustration and wondered whether their suffering would ever cease. In Australia or the West Indies they surf the beaches, drink their cocktails and graciously accept whatever cricketing fate presents itself. But Zimbabwe? Surely there have to be some certainties in life.

Today should go some way to revealing England's fate in this series. Having conceded 376, they can establish their superiority over the next two days by scoring 600 on a fast-pitched pitch and applying pressure on the final day. Alternatively the top six can make another hash of it and collapse against the leg-spin of Paul Strang. This being England on tour, both outcomes are entirely likely.

The one discouraging

image England must suppress is the final act of a rain-abbreviated second day — that of their captain Michael Atherton, trailing from the field at tea after falling lbw to Strang's 11th delivery. The rudimentary conclusion is that this was nothing more than a batsman getting out after being hit on the leg. Wrap it in psychological relevance and England might as well catch the next plane home.

Atherton had looked on top of his game: feet moving decisively, the big-game player again making his unconvincing form in the warm-up games seem an irrelevance. Then Strang pushed through a quicker, flatter leg-spinner and Atherton, on 16, was ambushed on the back foot. As the rain fell, with England 48 for one, the memory of his dismissal was washed into the outfield, dripped from the eaves of the century-old pavilion and left a cold, damp feeling creeping down the back of every English neck.

"It is a smashing batting pitch, and to lose a wicket like that to leg-spin was a disappointment," said David Lloyd, England's team manager. "But this leg-spinner has taken his Test wickets at a cost of more than 60 runs each. I'm not about to put any demons into the minds of our batsmen."

Zimbabwe were not so disinclined. Andy Flower, whose 112 had prolonged their first innings into mid-afternoon, insisted: "Everybody sees

Atherton as the backbone of the batting. It was nice to get rid of him. The ball is turning from the rough for Paul Strang and I reckon we can put England under pressure." England are quite capable of doing that themselves.

They laboured for a further 23 overs yesterday to split Zimbabwe's seventh-wicket pair and needed twice as long to bowl them out. No bowler disappointed more than Mulally. If he bowled with a reasonable economy, it was a fraudulent economy as he repeatedly failed to make the batsmen play. Silverwood, after his first four overs went for 26, could be reasonably content with his debut.

Strang played perkily for his 38, particularly against Tufnell, but it was Andy Flower, 58 overnight, whose six-hour resistance allowed no respite. He played with diligence and good organisation. There was occasional invention, too, notably when he reverse-swept Tufnell to reach his third Test hundred.

Streak dragged a weary delivery from Mulally into his stumps as Zimbabwe's last three wickets fell in eight balls. Flower, sweeping in Tufnell's next over, was caught on his glove by the wicketkeeper Stewart, and Olunga was neatly held later in the same over by Knight at silly point. After the torment that had passed before, it all seemed ridiculously easy.

Paul Allott and scoreboard, page 15



Walk-off part... Atherton leaves the stage after falling lbw. PHOTOGRAPH: HOWARD BURDITT

# Christmas on tour is a proper turkey



Frank Keating

**H**AVEN knows, the England cricketers in Zimbabwe must be yearning for Dominic Cork at his bounding, bonny best. With another Test next week, he'd stir up their pudding Christmas all right, wouldn't he?

Actually, I looked up Cork's published diary to find how he was rallying the troops in South Africa on Christmas Day last year. "Dec 25: A cricketer gets used to Xmas Day in the sun, round the pool or on the beach. After we Gregory opened his presents we went round to the house my folks are renting... How many ways are there of saying it's raining again? I have received the East Midlands Sports Personality award jointly with Forest's Steve Stone. Very honoured."

Well, not even the diaries of celebrated writers down the century have summoned much relish for Christmas Day, witness Joe Orton's one-liner thirty December 25s ago — "Had bacon & cauliflower for lunch; 90 kilos already dead on the roads" — or Evelyn Waugh's 30 years before that in 1936 — "Felt ill. Family fun. Nearly sick on way home."

Or, come to that, Noel Coward's exactly half a century ago in 1946: "Spent day in bed talking on telephone to Sybil, Graham, Gladys. Had delicious food, including caviare. Later, party at Binkie's."

Or Kenneth Williams's 25 years later: "Watched television, Christmas With The Stars. Stars indeed! What a JOKE. It's all 'BBC jobs for the boys'. Utter muck."

By then, in the early 1970s, England's cricketers abroad were enjoying the obligatory (since wretchedly forced) fancy-dress party, and doubtless the team's kiddy-master will again sell next week's pictures to the highest-bidding tabloid. Makes you feel as if Evelyn Waugh did in 1936.

To be sure, in his published journal of England's 1984 Christmas on the England tour to India, Vic Marks was so smitten by the idea that he devoted three detailed pages to the fancy-dress carnival — joint winners, Lord help us, Allan Lamb and Neil Foster as

Mr and Mrs Gandhi — in the Grand Hotel, Calcutta. Coincidentally, Marks's observations came on the very same December 25 that a kid, Warhol, then New York's icon, was making a similar botched fist of dressing up. "Tried to dye my eyebrows," he told his diary, "then my hair, but wasn't in the mood."

Marks's entry did admit: "A cricketer's Christmas on tour resembles an obstacle course, something to survive with the minimum of discomfort. We feel obliged to enjoy ourselves yet we would all prefer to be shivering back in our own homes with loved ones."

In that regard, the most touching Christmas Day entry in a cricketer's log I have come across was scribbled 86 years ago by the Middlesex bowler J T "Old Jack" Hearns on the MCC's Australian tour of 1897-98.

"Melbourne: Very very hot. Most indulged in an extra turn in bed. Chaps not been away from home at Christmas before seen a bit down. Ted Wainwright especially. He remarked very feelingly at breakfast, 'I wish I was back in the little cottage turning the meat'."

**A** DOZEN years before Mickey's tour, Tony Lewis had taken England to India, and his daily journal crackled with wit and observation. Lewis's first Test as captain, at Delhi, began on December 21 and ended on Christmas Day. What reading it makes.

"Dec 21: A R Lewis lhw Chandrasekhar 0. Went a debut. I retreated, head down, through all those buying Indians. I could not believe it. I flopped on the dressing-room chair. A duck. Was it really true? The England players were generous but I have to face the past, and the frightening future. Nought behind me, and what next time?"

"Dec 25: Can Christmas ever be the same again? England 207 for 4 to win by 6 wickets. Champagne, telegrams... I write these notes in bed. Me, 70 not out and Man of the Match! I was six overs getting off the mark: almost forever... I just wish I had known I was going to make 70 not out four days ago."

In 1873, 123 Christmas Days ago, W G Grace left his bride in a Melbourne hotel, borrowed a gun and drove in a buggy deep uncountrified in the hope, he wrote in his diary, "of bagging some kangaroos, though no such luck". He returned to his wife by midnight. Next day, Boxing Day, against 18 men of Victoria, the amazing Grace took 10 wickets and hit 51 not out.

## Clark tipped as FA technical director after quitting Forest

**N**OTTINGHAM FOREST'S formal announcement of their manager Frank Clark's resignation came as no shock yesterday, the team being without a win in 16 Premiership matches and looking doomed to fall off the gravy train. But Clark's next move may prove more of a surprise, writes Peter White.

The highly regarded 53-year-old has for some time been linked with the Manchester City hot seat and also

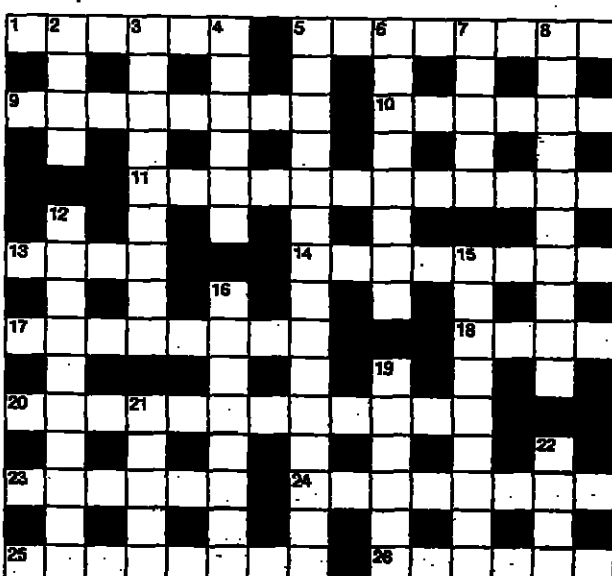
admits he has had "speculative offers" to work abroad, but insiders believe he may opt instead to become the Football Association's technical director.

In a further turn of the managerial merry-go-round, that appointment might also see Howard Wilkinson, linked to the FA post after his departure from Leeds United, taking up the reins at Forest.

Clark's sacrifice, page 14

## Guardian Crossword No 20,841

Set by Fawley



- Across**
- 1 Opera written in English style (6)
  - 5 Dad's leading turn-over of one market in type of beef (8)
  - 9 Queue endlessly for chemical preservative (8)
  - 10 Deputy tours state, giving lively performance (6)
  - 11 Exotic cocktail ingredient? Slip is a turn-off — almost revolting (7,5)
  - 13 Look — by an eye-catching design (4)
  - 14 Musical rejected by Roman censor not running smoothly (8)
  - 17 "Brown Sugar" re-mix made, including unusual backing (8)
  - 18 A chance to start a game (4)
  - 20 Battleground is reported quiet. Here's the picture... (12)
- Down**
- 2 Bear a derivative expression? (4)
  - 3 Flaggling, when trying to get across (8)
  - 4 Makes a great show of climbing mountains with murr? (6)
  - 5 It makes a point for writers of sketches (6,3)
  - 6 Has shown up to collect a vehicle number, that's plain (8)
  - 7 Traveller given wise advice used lead-free (5)

- 8 Computer range said to offer outdoor protection (10)
  - 12 Familiar situation — he opens last letter, not a cipher (4,8)
  - 15 It's vital to see this building (8)
  - 16 Resident worker supports regular activity (8)
  - 19 Women's ringing me, demonstrating Mercury, perhaps? (6)
  - 21 Noisy space-explorers left (6)
  - 22 Meecho man — a bit lacking up top (4)
- Solution tomorrow**
- 23 Stuck?** Then call our solutions line on every 3000 3000. Calls cost 50p per minute Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm, and 45p per minute at all other times. Service supplied by ATS

**ABSOLUT GENEROSITY.**

**The adrogyny that you can see in Liam Gallagher, Jarvis Cocker and Johnny Rotten is also, according to anthropology, one of the hallmarks of the shaman: the performer healing through his own sickness.**

Jon Savage on the first artist of Britpop

## Friday Review front